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POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

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# POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

AN ANTHOLOGY

1918 – 1938

SELECTED AND EDITED

BY

MAURICE WOLLMAN, M.A.

EDITOR, "MODERN POETRY, 1922-1934"

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## INTRODUCTION

THE aim of this Anthology is to give a survey of twenty years of post-War poetry in England. No poem is included that was published before the end of the War. Apart from two or three who are self-excluded, the only omissions are such poets as Hilaire Belloc and Sir Henry Newbolt, the bulk of whose work is pre-War.

Prophecy is always dangerous, but when the main contribution to poetry of the last two decades is assessed, it may be found that the period under review is primarily lyrical ; many fine narrative and satirical poems have been written, but they, excepting Masfield's narrative poems, are not read in this age of " sick hurry and divided aims," of tabloid news and the slick ready-made entertainment of the cinema and the wireless.

The Elizabethan age made wide discoveries in the physical and geographical world, and the Renaissance enlarged the fields of man's speculations ; but the twentieth century has made more momentous discoveries, and physical science has opened immenser realms to man's imagination, not all of them with potentialities for the greater happiness of mankind. These discoveries have stimulated man's mind, but some of them have been so shattering that man has not yet been able to reorientate himself. Hence, while some minds feel that

" Bliss is it in this dawn to be alive,  
But to be young is very Heaven,"

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more feel that man's conquest of his environment is insignificant compared with man's failure to conquer himself. Science and war have disillusioned mankind ; not that way lie self-conquest, self-realization, and a better world, a world free from injustice, inequality and intolerance, a world where man can "ensue peace." So, though this age may be mainly lyrical, many of the lyrics are songs of disillusionment or of fearful hope, the song of the bird in the storm or under the shadow of the storm past or the storm impending. But the lyric is not less lyrical for being wrung from despair.

Other poets turn, as poets have always done, to the immutable things of Nature—to flowers, birds, and animals. It is when one considers these poets in the light of contemporary events that one sees them as escapists—like the poets of Eldorado,

“ Out to seek an Age of Gold  
Beyond the Spanish Main.”

Thomas Hardy may be uttering an essential truth when he declares,

“ Only thin smoke without flame  
From the heaps of couch-grass :  
Yet this will go onward the same  
Though Dynasties pass,”

but it is little help and consolation to a fearful generation, and it is no solution or palliative of the difficulty. But whether a poet should offer a solution to contemporary problems is another and a debatable matter.

After the first exhilaration of the War, expressed in such poems as Rupert Brooke's *The Soldier* and Julian Grenfell's *Into Battle*, where the spirit of the poet is identified with the spirit of his country, and Thomas Hardy's *Men Who March Away* with its—

## INTRODUCTION

“ Press we to the field ungrieving,  
In our heart of hearts believing  
Victory crowns the just.

Hence the faith and fire within us  
Men who march away,”

came the realization of the bestiality and horror and waste and futility of war. Then followed cynicism, expressed in terms of derision of the earlier facile idealism, and with it the knowledge that the only good that ever arises from war is comradeship.

“ Was there love once ? I have forgotten her.  
Was there grief once ? Grief yet is mine.  
Other loves I have, men rough, but men who stir  
More grief, more joy, than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,  
Lined by the wind, burned by the sun ;  
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,  
As whose children we are brethren : one.”

(*Fulfilment* : Robert Nichols)

Foremost among the War poets was Siegfried Sassoon, one of the first to turn his disillusionment into poetry and one whose poetry marked with perfect candour the changes in the combatant's outlook on war. Later came Isaac Rosenberg, who, a promising poet before the War, had his tortured imagination further roughened and fevered by the War ; and Wilfred Owen, who would have developed into a fine poet even without the emotional impulse of the War. For Wilfred Owen, “ the poetry is in the pity ” :

“ The truth untold,  
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.”

And from this sorrow at the incalculable slaughter of youth and the turmoil around him, from “ the



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miseries of the world that would not let him rest," the poet turned to examine his own mind :

“ Here is no cause to mourn  
... save the undone years,  
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,  
Was my life also ; I went hunting wild  
After the wildest beauty in the world.”

To express this searing of the emotions, this clear-sighted waking from illusion, the poets felt the smooth words and rhythms of traditional verse to be incongruous and inadequate. They needed a freer verse. As did Walt Whitman, they moulded a form that made use of the vocabulary of everyday speech and the cadences and rhythms of prose.

“ Grant peace ;  
For a space let there be no roar  
Of wheels and voices, no din  
Of steel and stone and fire.  
Let us cleanse ourselves from the sweat and dirt,  
Let us be hushed, let us breathe  
The cold sterile wind from colourless space.”  
(*Retreat* : Richard Aldington)

Of the traditionalists some were strongly touched by the War and its generated emotions and reactions : for example, Edmund Blunden (especially in his prose *Undertones of War*, where are fused his two subjects, the War and the English countryside, and which reveals the sensitive poet's matured reflections on the War, as does Siegfried Sassoon's trilogy, *Complete Memoirs of George Sherston*) ; others were touched less ; still others not at all, especially W. H. Davies, who is a law unto himself.

The post-War generation has fallen into two camps : it has either pursued tradition as if the War had not

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occurred, or it has had its whole outlook modified by what happened from 1914 to 1918.

In 1922 T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* epitomized and gave a new impetus to the mood generated by the War—if anything so permeated by death and aridity can give impetus. The cynical bitterness and disillusioned disorientation caused by the War received their full expression in this sterile, but dynamically sterile, poem, so freed from any passage suggestive of consolation. In broken-down cadences was echoed the breaking-down of all life's decencies, standards, conventions, and beliefs. No philosophy of courage was availing; the only philosophy that was not meaningless was "defeatism." Echoing traditional passages of romantic and classical poetry in order to strengthen its pages and to emphasize the contrast between the spacious days of old and these barren times, *The Waste Land* probed through shams and exposed the dry bones of reality as seen by a Jeremiah. The poem also seemed to exploit the new interest in psychology and Freudian theories of the subconscious.

From this cadaver, risen, as it were, from the tomb, has issued a new class of poets. The earliest imitators of T. S. Eliot copied many of his falsities and negations, chief among them being Stephen Spender, C. Day Lewis, W. H. Auden, and Louis MacNeice. But these four show signs of winning to a new positive philosophy, a faith in the mind of man and the greatness of the human spirit. In rhythms based on the experiments of T. S. Eliot and Gerard Manley Hopkins, and even, in the first two of them, of Robert Bridges, and by means of an intrusive symbolism and vocabulary that are often private and personal, technical and elliptical, and using few of the conventions of traditional verse, at least three of these four are formulating a philosophy akin to Communism.

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Their verse is abundant in innuendoes, half-hints, bizarre symbolism, recondite images. But the basis of it is "man's inhumanity to man" and, offshoot of the War, the essential and eternal brotherhood of man. But the content of a poem, whether idealistic or Communistic, does not make poetry by itself, and it is often debated whether these four, judged in bulk, are poets in the true sense of the word.

Apart from them all, yet susceptible to current changes, stands he who is generally acclaimed as the greatest poet of the day—W. B. Yeats. In his early days he was a pure melodist, a poet of half tones and half lights, of the Celtic Twilight, of *The Fiddler of Dooney* and *Aedh Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*. He was then the poet of Irish myth and folk-lore, though influenced by his fellow poets of the Rhymers' Club, especially Ernest Dowson and Arthur Symons, who were under the latest French influences. The post-War Yeats has something of John Donne in him, and is a philosopher influenced by the mysticism of the Hindus (as is the latest James Stephens, and "A.E." from the beginning). His poetry is weighted with thought, as well as with symbolism. The melody is still there, but now it is not quite such a prominent part of the design.

A few poets remain, individualists, keeping a little apart from contemporary life in its aspects of flux and change, untouched by movements and schools of thought. Their main study is themselves or things absolute, and the political world around them is meaningless save in so far as it impinges on them. They include Roy Campbell, of the flamboyant line; W. H. Davies, the spontaneous and sensitive child of nature, singing as unselfconsciously as an Elizabethan; Walter de la Mare, who, with his wavering rhythms and magical cadences, wanders like a visitor from another country among the beautiful sights of this

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world ; A. E. Housman, the ironic stoic ; D. H. Lawrence, in revolt against machines and standardization, and upholding the holiness of man's appetites and instincts ; Hugh MacDiarmid, the leader of the Gaelic revival in Scotland ; Herbert Palmer, the twentieth-century Isaiah ; Ruth Pitter, in the classic tradition, intellectual, restrained, but spiritual and full of colour ; Lady Margaret Sackville, Landorian epigrammist, creating images of gem-like clarity ; Anna Wickham, the vehement feminist.

Here they are—a hundred poets, diversified as man's moods, but all alike bearing witness to the variety and interest of the life of the senses and the spirit.

MAURICE WOLLMAN

**SRINAGAR ( Kashmir )**

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## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

"A.E." (*George William Russell*) (1867-1935).—Irish writer and painter, poet and mystic, dreamer and practical genius. Born Lurgan, Co. Armagh. Studied at the Dublin School of Art, where he met W. B. Yeats. First an accountant; then he organised co-operative societies and agricultural banks for the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, later becoming Assistant Secretary and Editor of its magazine. *The Irish Statesman*, under his editorship, was noted for its "vigour, freshness and fairness." An enthusiastic supporter of Irish Nationalism. Largely instrumental in bringing the Irish War to an end. With W. B. Yeats, in the forefront of the Irish literary renaissance of the 'nineties; one of the founders of the Irish National Theatre (1899). One of the greatest modern painters, a kind of combination of Blake and Van Gogh: he used the Van Gogh technique before Van Gogh's pictures were known or seen. Had been in close contact with some of the leading Theosophists and Hindu mystics, whose beliefs have influenced much of his work. His poetry is inspired with the love of earth and of man, and a mystical sense of the oneness of things seen and the things that are unseen. His works include: *Songs by the Way* (1894); *New Poems* (1904); *Collected Poems* (1913); *The Candle of Vision* (1919); *Vale* (1932); *Song and Its Fountains* (1932); *The Avatars* (1933)—a prose romance of the future; *The House of the Titans and other Poems* (1934); *Selected Poems* (1936); *The Living Torch* (1937)—essays.

Aaronson, *Lazarus* (1894).—Works include: *Christ in the Synagogue* (1930); *Poems* (1933); *The Homeward Journey* (1945).

Abercrombie, *Lascelles* (1881-1938).—Poet, critic, and professor. Born in Cheshire. Educated Malvern, and Manchester University. Professor of English Literature, Bedford College, University of London, 1929-1935. Fellow and Tutor in English Literature, Merton College, Oxford, since 1935. Works include: *Interludes and Poems* (1908); *The Sale of St. Thomas* (1911 and 1930); *Emblems of Love* (1912); *Deborah* (1912); *Thomas Hardy* (1912), *The Epic* (1914), *Theory of Art* (1922), and *Principles of English*



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

*Prosody* (1923)—criticism ; *Twelve Idylls* (1928) ; *Collected Poems* (1930) ; *Poetry : Its Music and its Meaning* (1932) ; *Lyrics and Unfinished Poems* (1940).

*Anderson, J. Redwood* (1883).—Born at Manchester. Educated privately, and for a short time at Trinity College, Oxford. From five to twenty years of age resided abroad in Switzerland and Brussels, studying the violin at the Brussels Conservatoire. Travelled extensively in Italy, South Germany, and Egypt. Since 1915, master at Hymers College, Hull. His poetry shows the influence of Milton and Rilke. Great technical skill based on an intimate knowledge of prosody. Works include : *The Mask* (1912) ; *Flemish Tales* (1913) ; *Haunted Islands* (1923 and 1924) ; *Babel : a Dramatic Poem* (1927) ; *The Vortex* (1928) ; *Transvaluations* (1932) ; *English Fantasies* (1936) ; *The Curlew Cries* (1940).

*Angus, Marion* (1870).—Native of North-East Scotland. Has lived chiefly in Angus or Aberdeen. Writes in both Scots and English. Works include : *The Tinker's Road* (1924) ; *Sun and Candlelight* (1927) ; *The Turn of the Day* (1931) ; *Lost Country* (1937).

*Auden, Wystan Hugh* (1907).—Born at York. Son of Dr. G. A. Auden, School Medical Officer at Birmingham. Educated Gresham's School, Holt, and Christ Church, Oxford. Preparatory-school master. Awarded the King's Medal for Poetry, 1937. Works : *Poems* (1930) ; *The Orators* (1932) ; *Poems* (1933) ; *The Dance of Death* (1933) ; *The Dog beneath the Skin* (1935), *The Ascent of F6* (1936) and *On the Frontier* (1938)—with C. Isherwood—plays ; *Look, Stranger !* (1936) ; *Letters from Iceland* (1937)—with Louis MacNeice ; *Another Time* (1940) ; *New Year Letter* (1940).

*Barker, George* (1913).—Born in Essex. Of Irish extraction. Educated Marlborough L.C.C. School, Chelsea. Since his marriage in 1933 has lived in Dorset. Works : *Janus* (1935)—two tales ; *Poems* (1935) ; *Calamity* (1937).

*Bell, Julian Heward* (1908–1936).—Born in London. Educated Cambridge University. Killed fighting for the International Brigade of Republican Spain. Works : *Water Movement and other Poems* (1930) ; Edited *We Did Not Fight*—1914–1918 experiences of war resisters (1935) ; *Work for the Winter* (1936)—poems.

*Benson, Stella* (1892–1933).—Novelist, short-story writer, and poet. Born in Shropshire. Niece of Mary Cholmondeley, author of *Red Pottage*. Educated at home. Married, in 1921, J. C. O'Gorman Anderson of the Chinese

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Customs Service. Lived in China. Bequeathed a journal in twenty volumes to Cambridge University on condition that it should not be made public for fifty years. Works include : *I Pose* (1915) ; *Twenty* (1918)—poems ; *The Poor Man* (1922) ; *Pipers and a Dancer* (1924) ; *The Little World* (1926) and *Worlds within Worlds* (1928)—sketches of travel ; *Tobi Transplanted* (1931)—awarded the Femina Vie Heureuse Prize ; *Hope against Hope* (1931)—short stories ; *Mundos* (1935)—an unfinished novel ; *Poems* (1935) ; *Collected Short Stories* (1936).

*Binyon, Robert Laurence* (1869–1943).—Born at Lancaster. Cousin of Stephen Phillips. Educated St. Paul's School, and Trinity College, Oxford. Won the Newdigate Prize, 1890. Entered the British Museum, 1893 ; at first in the Library, afterwards (1895) in Department of Prints and Drawings ; Assistant Keeper, 1909 ; Deputy Keeper, in charge of the sub-department of Oriental Prints and Drawings, 1913–1932 ; Keeper of Prints and Drawings, 1932–1933. Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry, Harvard University, 1933–1934. Plays produced in London—*Paris and Oenone*, *Attila*, *Arthur*. Works include : *Lyrical Poems* (1894) ; *London Visions* (1895 and 1898) ; *Odes* (1900) ; *Blake* (1906) ; *Catalogue of English Drawings in the British Museum* (1898–1907) ; *Auguries* (1913) ; *Poetry and Modern Life* (1919) ; *The Sirens* (1927) ; *The Idols* (1928) ; *Collected Poems* (1931) ; *Verse Translation of "The Inferno"* (1933) ; *Painting in the Far East* (1934) ; *Verse Translation of "The Purgatorio"* (1938) and *"The Paradiso"* (1943).

*Blunden, Edmund Charles* (1896).—Educated Cleave's Grammar School, Yalding, Christ's Hospital, and Queen's College, Oxford. Served in France and Belgium during the War and received the Military Cross. Awarded Hawthornden Prize for *The Shepherd*, 1922, and Benson Medal of the Royal Society of Literature, 1930. Professor of English Literature, Tokyo University, Japan (1924–1927), occupying Lafcadio Hearn's old Chair. Fellow and Tutor in English Literature, Merton College, Oxford, since 1931. A pastoral poet, more scholarly than Clare, whose work he edited, but not less true to rural life and character. Works include : *Pastorals* (1915) ; *The Waggoner and other Poems* (1920) ; *The Bonaventure* (1922) ; *English Poems* (1925) ; *Undertones of War* (1928) ; *Collected Poems* (1930) ; *Halfway House* (1932) ; *Charles Lamb and his Contemporaries* (1933) ; *Choice or Chance* (1934)—poems ; *Keats' Publisher—John Taylor* (1934) ; *An Elegy and Other Poems* (1937) ; *Poems 1930–40* (1941).

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*Bottomley, Gordon* (1874).—Born at Keighley. Educated Keighley Grammar School. Awarded the Femina Vie Heureuse Prize, 1923, for his *Gruach and Britain's Daughter*, and the Benson Medal of the Royal Society of Literature, 1925. Vice-President of the British Drama League. His finest work is in his poetic dramas. He stands, with Laurence Binyon and T. Sturge Moore, on the side of humanity against modernity. Works include : *The Gate of Smaragdus* (1904) ; *King Lear's Wife* (1920) ; *Poems of Thirty Years* (1925) ; *Scenes and Plays* (1929) ; *Festival Preludes* (1930) ; *The Acts of St. Peter* (1933) ; *Choric Plays* (1939).

*Bramwell, James* (1911).—Educated Charterhouse and Balliol College, Oxford. From Balliol joined staff of the *London Mercury*. Left to take up writing in 1935. Works : *Beyond the Sunrise and other Poems* (1934) ; *Going West* (1935) and *Iron Gates* (1936)—fiction ; *Lost Atlantis* (1937).

*Bridges, Robert Seymour* (1844–1930), O.M., 1929.—Born in Kent. Educated Eton, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Practised as a physician in "Bart's," etc., retiring in 1882. Poet Laureate, 1913. Works include poems, plays, critical essays, and anthologies : *Prometheus the Firegiver* (1883) ; *Eros and Psyche* (1885) ; *The Growth of Love* (1876–89) ; *Shorter Poems* (1890, 1894) ; *Milton's Prosody* (1891) ; *Collected Poems* (1899) ; *Demeter* (1905) ; *Poetical Works* (1912) ; *The Spirit of Man* (1916)—an anthology ; *October* (1920) ; *New Verse* (1925) ; *The Testament of Beauty* (1929).

*Campbell, Roy Dunnachie* (1902).—Born at Durban, Natal. Educated Durban High School, and Natal University. Joined up with the South African infantry at the age of fifteen ; returned later to finish schooling ; spent some months at Oxford trying to pass Responsions ; after which, and having passed from job to job on land and sea, returned to London and married. Edited a monthly review in South Africa, which came into conflict with the authorities. Eventually settled down in partnership with French relatives at Martigues, Bouches du Rhône, as part-owner in fishing-boats. Razeteur and professional lancer in La Joyeuse Lance (champions of the Mediterranean in Les Joutes Nautiques, 1929–1931). Took three cocardes in the Arena at Arles and Nîmes, 1921. Won the cocarde at the grand taurine gala of Istres, 1931, fighting and throwing the bull single-handed without the aid of cape. Recreations—writing poetry and literary criticism. His is one of the two or three real reputations made in poetry since the War. Works include : *The Flaming Terrapin* (1924) ;



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*Adamastor* (1928); *The Georgiad* (1931); *Taurine Provence* (1932); *Flowering Reeds* (1933); *Broken Record* (1934)—reminiscences; *Mithraic Emblems* (1936); *Flowering Rifle* (1939).

*Chesterton, Gilbert Keith* (1874-1936).—Poet, novelist, essayist, journalist, writer upon literary and social subjects, editor, and author of one play, *Magic* (1913). Born at Kensington. Educated St. Paul's School; attended art classes at the Slade School (illustrated several books, chiefly novels by Mr. Hilaire Belloc). Editor of *G.K.'s Weekly*. Works include: *Robert Browning* (English Men of Letters Series); *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* (1904); *Charles Dickens* (1906); *The Man Who was Thursday* (1908); *All Things Considered* (1908); *The Innocence of Father Brown* (1911); *Manalive* (1912); *The Ballad of the White Horse* (1913); *The Flying Inn* (1914); *Poems* (1915); *The Ballad of St. Barbara* (1925); *Collected Poems* (1927); *Chaucer* (1932); *All I Survey* (1933) and *The Well and the Shadows* (1936)—essays; *Autobiography* (1936).

*Childe, Wilfred Rowland* (1890).—Educated Harrow, and Magdalen College, Oxford. Received into the Catholic Church (1914). Lecturer in English Literature, Leeds University, since 1922. Works include: *The Little City* (1911); *The Gothic Rose* (1922); *Ivory Palaces* (1925); *Blue Distance* (1930)—travel; *Selected Poems* (1936).

*Church, Richard* (1893).—Poet, novelist, and literary critic, Born in London. Educated Dulwich Hamlet School. Contributor to numerous periodicals. Reader to J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd. Works include: *The Flood of Life and other Poems* (1917); *Philip* (1923); *The Dream* (1927); *Mood without Measure* (1928); *News from the Mountain* (1932); *The Prodigal Father* (1933), *Apple of Concord* (1935) and *The Porch* (1937)—fiction; *Twelve Noon* (1936); *The Solitary Man* (1941); *Twentieth-Century Psalter* (1943).

*Clarke, Austin* (1896).—Educated University College, Dublin. English Lecturer at Dublin University, 1917-1921. National Award for Poetry, Tailteann Games, 1932. Foundation Member of the Irish Academy of Letters, 1932. Important experimentalist in verse, under the influence of old Gaelic verse. Numerous reviews in periodicals. Works include: *The Vengeance of Fionn* (1917); *The Cattle-drive in Connaught* (1925); *The Son of Learning* (1927)—a poetic comedy; *Pilgrimage* (1929); *The Bright Temptation* (1932) and *The Singing Men at Cashel* (1936)—fiction; *Collected Poems* (1936).

*Coppard, Alfred Edgar* (1878).—Short story-writer and poet. Born at Folkestone. Apprenticed to a London tailor.

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Began to compose poems and tales about 1911. His first book was the first to issue from the Golden Cockerel Press. Most of his writing is done in a hut in the Chilterns. Works include: *Adam and Eve and Pinch Me* (1921); *Clorinda Walks in Heaven* (1922); *The Field of Mustard* (1926); *Pelegea and other Poems* (1926); *Silver Circus* (1928); *Collected Poems* (1928); *Pink Furniture* (1930)—a story for children; *Nixey's Harlequin* (1931); *Polly Oliver* (1935); *Cherry Ripe* (1935)—poems; *Ninepenny Flute* (1937).

*Daryush, Elizabeth* (1887).—Daughter of the late Robert Bridges. Married Ali Akbar Khan Daryush, of Persia. Works: *Verses, I.* (1930); *Verses, II.* (1932); *Verses, III.* (1933); *Verses, IV.* (1934); *Poems* (1935); *The Last Man* (1936); *Verses, VI.* (1938).

*Davies, William Henry* (1871–1940).—Born at Newport, Monmouthshire. Picked up knowledge among tramps in America, on cattle-boats, and in common lodging-houses in England. Apprenticed to a picture-frame maker. Became a tramp in America for six years, making eight or nine trips with cattle to England. Returned to England, and settled in common lodging-houses in London and made several walking-tours as a pedlar. After eight years of this, published his first book of poems, *The Soul's Destroyer*. Became a poet at thirty-four years of age, and has been one ever since. Awarded a Civil List pension for his "distinction as a poet." Recreation—walking, mostly alone. Works include: *New Poems* (1907); *The Autobiography of a Super-Tramp* (1908); *Collected Poems* (1916, 1928, and 1934); *Later Days* (1925)—autobiography; *Love Poems* (1935); *The Birth of Song* (1936).

*Davison, Edward Lewis* (1898).—Educated Cambridge University. Editor of *Cambridge Review*, 1920–1922. Literary Editor of *The Challenge*, 1922–1923. On the *Manchester Guardian*, 1924–1925. Editor of *Cambridge Poets: an Anthology*, 1920. Contributor to numerous English and American periodicals. Works include: *Poems* (1920); *Poems by Four Authors* (1923); *Harvest of Youth* (1926); *Some Modern Poets* (1928); *The Heart's Unreason* (1931).

*De la Mare, Walter John* (1873).—Born in Kent. Descended from a Huguenot family, and related to Browning. Educated St. Paul's Cathedral Choir School, London. Spent eighteen years in commercial life before, in 1908, devoting his time to literature. His first book (*Songs of Childhood*, 1902) was published under the name of Walter Ramal, but his second (*Henry Brocken*, 1904—a prose romance) appeared under his own name. Awarded a Civil List

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pension for the distinction of his literary work. Works include: *Poems* (1906); *The Return* (1910)—awarded the Polignac Prize, 1911; *The Listeners* (1912); *Peacock Pie* (1913); *Collected Poems* (1920); *Memoirs of a Midget* (1921)—fiction—awarded the James Tait Black Prize; *Come Hither* (1923)—an anthology; *The Fleeting and other Poems* (1933); *Early One Morning* (1935); *Poems 1919-33* (1936); *The Wind Blows Over* (1936); *This Year, Next Year* (1937); *Memory and other Poems* (1938); *The Burning Glass* (1945).

*Douglas, Lord Alfred* (1870-1945).—Educated Winchester and Magdalen College, Oxford. Editor of the *Academy*, 1907-1910; founder and editor of *Plain English* and *Plain Speech*. Received into the Catholic Church, 1911. Works include: Poetry—*The City of the Soul* (1899); *Sonnets* (1909); *Collected Poems* (1919); *In Excelsis* (1924); *Complete Poems* (1928); New Edition in two volumes, *Sonnets and Lyrics* (1935). Various volumes of light verse. Biography—*Oscar Wilde and Myself* (1914); *Autobiography* (1929). *Collected Satires* (1927). *Without Apology* (1938)—reminiscences.

*Drinkwater, John* (1882-1937).—Born in Essex. Educated Oxford High School and Birmingham University. For twelve years in various assurance offices. Co-founder of the Pilgrim Players, which developed into the Birmingham Repertory Theatre Company. His finest and most enduring work is perhaps in his prose dramas, *Abraham Lincoln* (1918), *Oliver Cromwell* (1921), *Robert E. Lee* (1923). Works include: *Poems* (1914); *Olton Pools* (1916); *Preludes* (1922); *Collected Poems I and II* (1923); *Cromwell* (1927); *Bird-in-Hand* (1928)—a comedy; *All About Me* (1928)—children's verses; *Inheritance* (1931)—an autobiography; *Summer Harvest* (1933); *A Man's Past* (1934)—a play; *Robinson of England* (1937); *Collected Poems III* (1937).

*Dyment, Clifford* (1914).—Born in the Midlands. Educated elementary schools and Loughborough Grammar School. Has been a shop-assistant, clerk, commercial traveller, and film critic. Works: *First Day* (1935); *Straight or Curly* (1937); *The Axe in the Wood* (1944); *Selected Poems* (1945).

*Eliot, Thomas Stearns* (1888).—Born at St. Louis, Missouri, of an old New England family. Educated Harvard University, the Sorbonne, and Merton College, Oxford. In 1914 he settled in London, where he has lived ever since, becoming a naturalised Englishman in 1927. For a time he was Assistant Editor of *The Egoist*, and helped to found *The Criterion*, of which he is still Editor. Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry, Harvard University, 1932-1933.



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Director of the publishers, Faber & Faber, Ltd. He has greatly influenced the younger generation of writers, in both England and America. Works include : *The Sacred Wood* (1920)—essays ; *The Waste Land* (1922) ; *Poems* (1925) ; *For Lancelot Andrewes* (1928)—essays ; *Ash Wednesday* (1930) ; *Selected Essays* (1932) ; *The Rock* (1934)—a pageant-play ; *Elizabethan Essays* (1934) ; *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935)—a play ; *Collected Poems* (1936) ; *Essays Ancient and Modern* (1936) ; *The Family Reunion* (1938)—a verse-play ; *East Coker* (1940) ; *The Dry Salvages* (1941) ; *Little Gidding* (1942).

*Empson, William* (1906).—Born in Yorkshire. Educated Winchester and Magdalene College, Cambridge. Professor of English Literature at the Imperial University, Tokyo, 1931–1934. Works : *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930) ; *Some Versions of Pastoral* (1935) ; *Poems* (1935) ; *The Gathering Storm* (1940).

*Freeman, John* (1880–1929).—Poet, critic, novelist. Born in London. Winner of the Hawthornden Prize, 1920, for *Poems 1909–1920*. Contributor to numerous periodicals. Secretary, Director, and Chief Executive Officer of the Liverpool Victoria Friendly Society. Works include : *Ancient and Modern Essays in Literary Criticism* (1917) ; *Memories of Childhood and other Poems* (1919) ; *Music* (1921) ; *Collected Poems* (1928) ; *Last Poems* (1930).

*Gawsworth, John* (1912).—Poet, bibliographer and bookman. Editor of *Neo-Georgian Poetry*, a series in progress. Born London, of Anglo-Celtic parentage (related on father's side to Ben Jonson and to Lionel Johnson, and on mother's to the attributed Dark Lady of Shakespeare's sonnets and to Milton's third wife). Educated Merchant Taylor's School. Literary Adviser to the Richards Press, Ltd. In 1937 discovered eleven spurious fragments in the Mitford and Beeching texts of Milton's Poetical Works. His volumes of verse, prose, bibliography, and translation total, together with his editions of works by Havelock Ellis, Wilfrid Ewart, Richard Middleton, etc., some fifty titles. *Poems* (Fourth, Augmented and Revised, Edition) (1938) ; *New Poems* (1939) ; *The Mind of Man* (1940) ; *Marlow Hill* (1941) ; *Legacy to Love* (1943).

*Gibbons, Stella* (1902).—Born in London. Educated North London Collegiate School for Girls, and University College, London. Journalist, 1924–1933. Awarded Femina Vie Heureuse Prize, 1934, for the novel *Cold Comfort Farm* (1933). Works : *The Mountain Beast and other Poems* (1930) ; *The Bassetts* (1934)—a novel ; *The Priestess and other Poems*

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(1934); *Enbury Heath* (1935), *Miss Linsey and Pa* (1936) and *Nightingale Wood* (1938)—fiction.

*Gibson, Wilfrid Wilson* (1878).—Born in Northumberland. During the War he served in the ranks. He interprets the lives of ordinary men and women. Works include: *Stonefolds* (1907); *Daily Bread* (1910); *Battle* (1915); *Friends* (1916); *Neighbours* (1920); *Krindlesyke* (1922)—a dramatic poem, which he considers his best work; *I Heard a Sailor* (1925); *Collected Poems* (1926); *The Golden Room* (1928); *Islands* (1932); *Fuel* (1934); *The Alert* (1941); *Challenge* (1943).

*Gittings, Robert* (1911).—Awarded the Chancellor Medal for English Verse at Cambridge, 1930. Works: *The Roman Road and other Poems* (1932); *The Story of Psyche—a Narrative Poem* (1936).

*Guinness, Bryan Walter* (1905).—Born in London. Educated Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. Barrister-at-law. Recreation—walking. Works: *Singing out of Tune* (1933); *Landscape with Figures* (1934), and *A Week by the Sea* (1936)—fiction; *Under the Eyelid* (1935)—poems.

*Hardy, Thomas* (1840–1928), O.M. 1910.—Born near Dorchester. Apprenticed to an ecclesiastical architect. Gave up architecture for literature. He was a poet before he was a novelist, and in his twenties “practised the writing of poetry very assiduously,” but abandoned that art when he began his career as a novelist. When he found that his two last novels, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), were misunderstood, he resolved to write no more fiction and turned back to poetry. In all his work Nature forms a background to, if not a cause of, man’s conflict and tragedy. Works include: *Desperate Remedies* (1871); *The Return of the Native* (1878); *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886); *Wessex Poems* (1898); *Time’s Laughing-Stocks* (1909); *The Dynasts* (1910)—an epic-poem; *Late Lyrics and Earlier* (1922); *Winter Words* (1928); *Collected Poems* (1928).

*Hassall, Christopher Vernon* (1912).—Younger son of John Hassall, R. I. Educated St. Michael’s College, Tenbury, Brighton College, and Wadham College, Oxford. Played Romeo for the O.U.D.S. 1932. Toured Egypt and Australia as juvenile lead in repertory of twelve plays; at Old Vic and West End 1933. Toured provinces 1934. Left the stage 1935. Recreations—musical composition and play-going. Works: *Poems of Two Years* (1935); *Devil’s Dyke, with Compliment and Satire* (1936); *Christ’s Comet* (1938)—a poetic drama; *Penthesperon* (1939); *S.O.S. Ludlow* (1940).



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*Higgins, Frederick Robert* (1896–1941).—Born at Foxford, Co. Mayo. Educated at various country schools in Mayo. Began work at the age of fourteen in Dublin. Later became an official in the Irish Labour Movement. From 1920 edited various Irish periodicals, economic and literary. A frequent contributor of poetry and critical studies to English, American, and Irish literary journals. Foundation Member of the Irish Academy of Letters. For the last three years he has lived exclusively among the folk of Western Ireland. Recreations—"playing the melodeon, and drinking with mountainy men." Works include: *Salt Air—Poems* (1924); *Island Blood* (1925); *The Dark Breed* (1927); *Arable Holdings* (1933); *The Gap of Brightness* (1940).

*Hodgson, Ralph* (1871).—Born in Yorkshire. Worked as a pressman in Fleet Street. Edited *Fry's Magazine*. Has lived in America. Winner of the Polignac Prize (1914) for *The Bull* and *The Song of Honour*. Professor of English Literature at the Imperial University of Sendai, Japan, since 1924. Works: *The Last Blackbird* (1907); *Poems* (1917); *Hymn to Moloch* (1921).

*Housman, Alfred Edward* (1859–1936).—Poet and scholar. Educated Bromsgrove School and St. John's College, Oxford. Hon. Fellow of the College. Post in H.M. Patent Office. Professor of Latin, University College, London, 1892–1911. Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, 1911, and Professor of Latin. Chief publications, besides many papers in classical journals, are editions of *Juvenal* (1905), *Manilius* (1903–1920), and *Lucan* (1926), *The Name and Nature of Poetry* (1933), and three volumes of lyrics, *A Shropshire Lad* (1896), *Last Poems* (1922), and *More Poems* (1937).

*Johnson, Geoffrey* (1900).—Secondary School Master. Born in the Black Country. Educated Wolverhampton Grammar School and London University. Contributor of short stories, verse, and verse-criticism to various periodicals. Recreations: walking, cycling, gardening, foreign languages, and travel. Works: *The Quest Unending* (1930); *Changing Horizons* (1932); *Mother to Son* (1935); *The Scholar* (1936).

*Kavanagh, Patrick* (1905).—Born in County Monaghan, Ireland. Son of a shoemaker. Educated Common National School. Left school at thirteen. "Squandered next ten years." Under the influence of "A.E." began to write verse. First poems published in *Irish Statesman* and *Spectator*. Has tramped all over Ireland. Works: *Ploughman and other Poems* (1936); *The Green Fool* (1938)—an autobiography; *A Soul for Sale* (1947).

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*Kendon, Frank* (1893).—Born in Kent. Educated in Kent, and, after service, 1914–1918, in Palestine, at St. John's College, Cambridge. Journalist. Works: *Poems and Sonnets* (1924); *Arguments and Emblems* (1925); *A Life and Death of Judas Iscariot* (1926); *The Small Years* (1930)—an autobiography; *The Adventure of Poetry* (1933); *Tristram* (1934)—a ballad narrative; *The Cherry-Minder* (1935).

*Kipling, Rudyard* (1865–1936).—Born in Bombay and lived in India as a child. Educated United Services College, Westward Ho, North Devon. Assistant Editor in India of the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer*, 1882–1889. Travelled in China, Japan, America, Africa, and Australasia. Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature, 1907, and Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature, 1926. Rector of the University of St. Andrews, 1922–1925. Works include: *Departmental Ditties* (1886); *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1887); *Barrack-Room Ballads* (1892); *Many Inventions* (1893); *The Jungle Books* (1894–1895); *The Seven Seas* (1896); *Kim* (1901); *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906); *Actions and Reactions* (1909); *Debits and Credits* (1926); *Limits and Renewals* (1932); *Something of Myself* (1937)—autobiography.

*Lawrence, David Herbert* (1885–1930).—Born in Nottinghamshire, son of a miner. Educated Nottingham High School and Nottingham Day Training College. Became a teacher in an elementary school. Travelled extensively. Novelist, poet, and short-story writer. Works include: *The White Peacock* (1911)—fiction; *Love Poems and Others* (1913); *Sons and Lovers* (1913)—fiction; *Amores* (1916); *New Poems* (1919); *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923); *Kangaroo* (1923) and *St. Mawr* (1924)—fiction; *Pansies* (1929); *Collected Poems* (1930); *Last Poems* (1933); *Phœnix* (1936)—collected essays.

*Lehmann, Rudolf John Frederick* (1907).—Educated Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. Has travelled and worked as a journalist a great deal in Central Europe. Works: Editor, *New Writing* from 1936, and *The Year's Poetry*, 1934–1936; *A Garden Revisited and other Poems* (1931); *The Noise of History* (1934)—poems; *Prometheus and the Bolsheviks* (1937)—travel; *The Sphere of Glass* (1944).

*Lewis, Cecil Day* (1904).—Born Ballintubber, Queen's Co., Ireland, of Anglo-Irish parentage (related on mother's side to Oliver Goldsmith). Educated Sherborne School, and Wadham College, Oxford. Edited *Oxford Poetry*, 1927. Assistant Master at Summerfields, Oxford, 1927–1928; Larchfield, Helensburgh, 1928–1930; Cheltenham College

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*Gravestock*

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Junior School, 1930-1935. Recreations—bird-watching, singing, darts. Works : *Country Comets* (1928) ; *Transitional Poem* (1929) ; *From Feathers to Iron* (1931) ; *The Magnetic Mountain* (1933) ; *A Hope for Poetry* (1934)—criticism ; *A Time to Dance* (1934) ; *Collected Poems* (1934) ; *Noah and the Waters* (1936) ; *The Friendly Tree* (1936), and *Starting Point* (1937)—fiction ; *Poems in Wartime* (1940) ; *Word over All* (1943).

*Lynd, Sylvia* (1888).—Educated Slade School, and Academy of Dramatic Art. Married, 1909, Robert Lynd, Literary Editor of the *News-Chronicle*, essayist and critic. Works include : *The Thrush and the Jay* (1916)—poems ; *The Chorus* (1916)—a novel ; *The Goldfinches* (1920)—poems ; *The Swallow Dive* (1921)—a novel ; *The Mulberry Bush* (1925)—stories ; *The Yellow Placard* (1931)—poems ; Editor of *The Children's Omnibus* (1932) ; *The Enemies* (1934)—poems.

*Lyon, Lilian Bowes* (1895).—Born in Northumberland. Nursed, the last eighteen months of the War. Has done a year's teaching under Fisher's Scheme and some farming. A good deal abroad, but "a rather lonely part of Northumberland has been still at the back of my work." Works : *The Buried Stream* (1929)—fiction ; *The White Hare* (1934), *Bright Feather Fading* (1936) ; *To-morrow is a Revealing* (1941).

*Macaulay, Rose*.—Novelist, poet, essayist, and literary critic. Father was a lecturer in English Literature at Cambridge. Brought up in Italy. Studied at home. Works include : *What Not* (1919), *Potterism* (1920), *Dangerous Ages* (1922)—awarded the Femina Vie Heureuse Prize, *Keeping Up Appearances* (1928), and *They were Defeated* (1932)—fiction ; *John Milton* (1933) ; two volumes of verse (1914 and 1919) ; *Going Abroad* (1934)—fiction ; *The Minor Pleasures of Life* (1934), and *Personal Pleasures* (1935)—anthologies ; *I Would Be Private* (1937)—fiction ; *The Writings of E. M. Forster* (1938).

*McCausland, Nora Kerney* (1891).—Works : *The Cunning Chemist*—illustrated nonsense verse for children ; *The Legendary Shore* (1937)—poems.

*MacDiarmid, Hugh* (Christopher Murray Grieve) (1892).—Born Dumfriesshire. Educated Edinburgh University. One of the founders of the Scottish Nationalist Party. Regular contributor on literary, political, and general matters to many British and foreign newspapers and periodicals. Recreation—"Anglophobia." Works include : *Contemporary Scottish Studies* ; *Albyn, or the Future of Scotland* ; *Penny Wheep* (1926) ; *Scots Unbound* (1932) ; *Second Hymn to Lenin* (1935) ; *Lucky Poet* (1943)—autobiography.



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*McKenna, Michael* (1910-1931).—Born Admiralty House, Whitehall. Eldest son of the Rt. Hon. Reginald McKenna, then First Lord of the Admiralty. Educated Summerfields, Oxford, Eton (Captain of the School, 1928) and Trinity College, Cambridge. "Among the poets he cared most for Virgil and Milton, but at all times he had a hungry mind, and it was difficult to find any subject (except pure mathematics) in which he was not keenly interested." The late Provost of Eton wrote of him: "It is likely that he, who was of independent mind and not content to leave wrongs untouched, would have done good service in the world." *Poems* (1932).

*Maclaren, Hamish* (1901).—Born Tain, Ross-shire. At sea, 1917-1924. Lt.-Cdr., R.N. A rolling stone in the modern world, hop-picker, pedlar, commercial traveller; for some time Associate Literary Editor of the *Spectator*. Works: *Sailor with Banjo* (1929)—poems; *Private Opinions of a British Bluejacket* (1929); *Cockalorum* (1936)—autobiography.

*MacNeice, Frederick Louis* (1907).—Born in Belfast. Family came from West of Ireland. Educated Marlborough College and Merton College, Oxford. At Oxford read *Litterae Humaniores* (First in "Mods." and First in "Greats"). Lecturer in Classics at University of Birmingham, 1930-1936. Since 1936 Lecturer in Greek at Bedford College for Women in the University of London. Works include: *Blind Fireworks* (1929)—poems; *Poems* (1935); *Letters from Iceland* (1937)—with W. H. Auden; *Out of the Picture* (1937)—a play; *The Earth Compels* (1938)—poems; *I Crossed the Minch* (1938)—a travel-book about the Outer Hebrides; *Modern English Poetry* (1938); *Autumn Journal* (1939); *Plant and Phantom* (1941); *Springboard* (1944).

*Masefield, John* (1875), O.M., 1935.—Born in Herefordshire. Went to sea at an early age, spent years in adventure by sea and land, chiefly America, where he earned his living by doing odd jobs. Returned to England and devoted himself to literature—poems, plays, novels, essays, short stories, and critical prose. Poet Laureate in succession to Robert Bridges, 1931. Works include: *Salt-Water Ballads* (1902); *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911); *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912); *Dauber* (1913); *The Daffodil Fields* (1913); *Reynard the Fox* (1919); *Right Royal* (1920); *Collected Poems* (1923); *Sard Harker* (1924) and *Odtaa* (1926)—fiction; *Midsummer Night* (1928); *End and Beginning* (1934); *Victorious Troy* (1936); *A Letter from Pontus* (1936); *The Square Peg*

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*or the Gun Fella* (1937)—fiction; *The Country Scene* (1937); *Gautama the Enlightened* (1941); *Wonderings* (1943).

*Mew, Charlotte* (1869–1928).—Born in London. The daughter of an architect who died in straitened circumstances. She passed practically all her life in the heart of Bloomsbury. Poverty and family misfortunes dogged all her days—"her poems show an intense preoccupation with death and disaster either physical or spiritual." In 1923, through the united efforts of Hardy, John Masefield and Walter de la Mare, she received a Civil List pension. Although her poverty was alleviated, family misfortunes still pursued her. She died in a nursing-home by her own hand on March 24, 1928. Works: *The Farmer's Bride and other Poems* (1916); *The Rambling Sailor and other Poems* (1929).

*Meyerstein, Edward Harry William* (1889).—Born in Hampstead. Educated Harrow and Magdalen College, Oxford. 1913–1918 assistant at British Museum (Department of Manuscripts) and in 1914 joined the Third Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Recreation—music. Works include: *Symphonies* (1915 and 1919); *In Merlin's Wood* (1922); *A Life of Thomas Chatterton* (1930); *New Symphonies* (1933); *Terence Duke* (1935)—a novel; *Selected Poems* (1935); *Translation of the Elegies of Propertius* (1935); *Séraphine* (1936)—a novel; *Boy of Clare* (1937)—poems; *Joshua Slade* (1938)—fiction; *Sonnets* (1939); *The Visionary* (1941); *In Time of War* (1942); *Azure* (1944).

*Monro, Harold* (1879–1932).—Born in Brussels, where he lived for six or seven years. Educated Radley, and Caius College, Cambridge. Spent a few years in Ireland, Florence, and Switzerland. Founded the *Poetry Review*, 1911, and later, *Poetry and Drama*. In January 1913, founded the Poetry Bookshop, Theobalds Road—a place of call for all who were interested in poetry. It was a success, but not commercially—it gained an international reputation. After the War he produced various "Chapbooks"—anthologies of modern poetry. New movements in poetry owe a great debt to the poet and to the Poetry Bookshop—"The Mermaid Tavern of the twentieth century." Works include; *Judas* (1908); *Before Dawn* (1910); *Children of Love* (1914); *Strange Meetings* (1917); *Some Contemporary Poets* (1920); *Real Property* (1922); *The Earth for Sale* (1928); *Twentieth-Century Poetry* (1929)—an anthology; *Collected Poems* (1933).

*Moore, Thomas Sturge* (1870–1944).—Wood-engraver and designer of book-plates and book-covers, poet, and prose-writer. Born at Hastings. Member of the Academic Com-

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mittee of the Royal Society of Literature. Awarded a Civil List pension, 1920. Works include : *The Vinedresser* (1899) ; *Dürer* (1904) ; *Poems* (1906) ; *Correggio* (1906) ; *Art and Life* (1910) ; *Judas* (1923) ; *Collected Poems*—four volumes (1932–1934) ; *Selected Poems* (1934) ; *The Unknown Known* (1939).

*Muir, Edwin*.—Educated Kirkwall Burgh School, Orkney. A clerk in various commercial and shipbuilding offices in Glasgow. Later, journalist, translator, and author. Assistant Editor of *The New Age*, 1919–1921. Co-Editor of the *European Quarterly* since 1934. Recreations—swimming and patience. Works include : *The Marionette* and *The Three Brothers*—novels ; *First Poems* (1925) ; *Chorus of the Newly-Dead* (1926) ; *Transition* ; *Structure of the Novel*—criticism ; *John Knox*—biography ; *Variations on a Time-Theme* (1934)—poems ; *Poor Tom* (1934)—a novel ; *Scottish Journey* (1935) ; *Journeys and Places* (1937) ; *The Narrow Place* (1943).

*Nichols, Robert Malise Bowyer* (1893–1944).—Born at Shanklin. Educated Winchester and Trinity College, Oxford. Second Lieutenant R.F.A., October 1914 to August 1916 ; served on Western front ; British Mission (Ministry of Information) to U.S.A., 1918. Professor of English Literature in the Imperial University of Tokyo (Chair of Lafcadio Hearn), 1921–1924. Recreations—conversation and music. Works : *Invocation* (1915)—poems ; *Ardours and Endurances* (1917) ; *Aurelia* (1920) ; *Guilty Souls* (1920)—drama ; *Fantastica* (1923)—romances of ideas ; *Under the Yew* (1927)—short novel ; *Wings over Europe* (1929)—drama, with Maurice Browne ; *Fisbo* (1934)—a satirical poem ; *Such Was My Singing* (1942).

*O'Connor, Frank* (1903).—Born in Cork. Director of Abbey Theatre, Dublin, and Foundation Member Irish Academy of Letters. Works : *Guests of the Nation* (1931) ; *The Wild Bird's Nest—Poems from the Irish* (1932) ; *The Saint and Mary Kate* (1932)—fiction ; *Bones of Contention and other Stories* (1936) ; *Three Old Brothers and other Poems* (1936) ; *The Big Fellow* (1937)—biography ; *The Fountain of Magic* (1939)—translations of Old Irish Verse.

*O'Sullivan, Seumas* (1879).—Editor of the *Dublin Magazine*. Works include : *The Twilight People* (1905) ; *Verses Sacred and Profane* (1908) ; *Poems* (1912) ; *Common Adventures* (1926) ; *Poems 1930–38* (1939) ; *Collected Poems* (1941).

*Owen, Wilfred* (1893–1918).—Born at Oswestry, Shropshire. Educated London University. Served in the War, awarded the Military Cross, and was killed in action a week before the Armistice. "My study is War and the pity of War. The Poetry is in the pity." *Poems* (1920)—with



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an introduction by Siegfried Sassoon ; *Poems* (1931)—new edition, with notices of his life and work by Edmund Blunden.

*Palmer, Herbert Edward* (1880).—Born at Market Rasen. Educated Woodhouse Grove School, Birmingham University, and Bonn University. Has earned his living as schoolmaster, private tutor, journalist, and public reader and lecturer (chiefly for the W.E.A.). Gave up schoolmastering, in 1921, for literature and journalism. Previous to the War lived over eight years in France and Germany. Awarded Civil List pension in 1932 for his "distinction as a poet." Frequent contributor to numerous periodicals. Recreations—"fly-fishing for trout and grayling, and long-distance hill-walking." "All my poems have been written for the voice, for I pride myself nearly as much on my capacities for reading poetry to an audience as for writing it and writing about it." Works include : *Two Fishers* (1918) ; *Two Minstrels* (1921) ; *The Unknown Warrior* (1924) ; *The Judgment of François Villon* (1927)—a biographical play ; *The Teaching of English* (1930) ; *Cinder Thursday* (1931) ; *Collected Poems* (1933) ; *The Roving Angler* (1933)—essays ; *Summit and Chasm* (1934)—poems ; *The Mistletoe Child : an Autobiography of Childhood* (1935) ; *The Vampire* (1936) ; *Post-Victorian Poetry* (1938) ; *The Gallows Cross* (1940) ; *Season and Festival* (1943) ; *A Sword in the Desert* (1946).

*Parsons, Clere Trevor James Herbert* (1908–1931).—*Poems* (1932).

*Pitter, Ruth* (1897).—Born at Ilford, Essex. Educated elementary school and Coborn School, Bow. With Walberswick Peasant Pottery Co. at Walberswick, Suffolk, till 1920, and then at Kensington till 1930. In partnership in private business of some kind from 1930. "Does all kinds of painted things, wholesale. Does not believe in it, but rather enjoys it." Awarded the Hawthornden Prize for 1937 for *A Trophy of Arms* (1936). Works : *First Poems* (1920) ; *First and Second Poems* (1927) ; *A Mad Lady's Garland* (1934) ; *A Trophy of Arms—Poems 1926–1935* (1936) ; *The Spirit Watches* (1939).

*Plomer, William Charles Franklyn* (1903).—Born at Pietersburg, Northern Transvaal. Educated Rugby and elsewhere. At one time a farmer in the Stormberg ; later, a trader in Zululand. Went to Japan for two years. Travelled in Europe, and went to live in Greece (1929). Contributor to numerous periodicals. Recreations—"varied, preferably swimming." Works include : *Turbott Wolfe* (1926) ; *I Speak of Africa* (1927) ; *Notes for Poems* (1928) ; *The Family Tree* (1929)—poems ; *Sado* (1931)—a novel ; *The Five-fold*



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*Screen* (1932)—poems ; *The Case is Altered* (1932)—a novel ; *Cecil Rhodes* (1933)—biography ; *The Child of Queen Victoria* (1933)—short stories ; *Visiting the Caves* (1937)—poems.

*Read, Herbert Edward* (1893).—Born in Yorkshire. Educated Leeds University. Commissioned January 1915, to the Yorkshire Regiment ; Captain, 1917 ; fought in France and Belgium (M.C., D.S.O., Despatches) ; Assistant Principal, H.M. Treasury, 1919–1922 ; Assistant Keeper, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1922–1931 ; Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art in the University of Edinburgh, 1931–1933. Editor of the *Burlington Magazine*. Works include : *Naked Warriors* (1919) ; *Eclogues* (1919) ; *Mutations of the Phœnix* (1923) ; *English Prose Style* (1928) ; *The Meaning of Art* (1931) ; *The Innocent Eye* (1933)—autobiography ; *The End of a War* (1933) ; *Poems 1915–35* (1935).

*Rickword, John Edgell* (1898).—Born at Colchester. Contributor to *Oxford Poetry* before he was twenty. Works include : *Behind the Eyes* (1921)—poems ; *Rimbaud : the boy and the poet* (1924) ; *Invocations to Angels and the Happy New Year* (1928)—poems ; Editor, *Scrutinies* (1928) ; *Twittingpan, and some others* (1931)—satirical poems.

*Roberts, Michael* (1902).—Born at Bournemouth. Educated King's College, London, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Recreations—climbing, ski-ing, swimming. Works include : *These Our Matins* (1930)—poems ; Editor, *New Signatures* (1932) and *New Country* (1933) ; *Critique of Poetry* (1934) ; Editor *Faber Book of Modern Verse* (1936) ; *Poems* (1936) ; *T. E. Hulme* (1938)—a critical study ; *Orion Marches* (1939).

*Rosenberg, Isaac* (1890–1918).—Born in London. Apprenticed as a photograph engraver. "Poetry was his obsession." Painted, and wrote poetry, but without recognition till 1914. Went to South Africa for a year or two. "Isaac Rosenberg is one of the two great poets killed in the War—the other being Wilfred Owen"—Edith Sitwell. *Collected Poems* (ed. Gordon Bottomley) (1922 and 1937).

*Sackville, Lady Margaret* (1881).—Third daughter of the seventh Earl de la Warr. Works : *Poems* (1901) ; *A Hymn to Dionysus and other Poems* (1905) ; *Hildris the Queen* (1908) ; *Lyrics* (1912) ; *Songs of Aphrodite* (1913) ; *Selected Poems* (1919) ; *Epitaphs* (1921 and 1926) ; *Poems* (1923) ; *Collected Dramas* (1926) ; *A Hundred Little Poems* (1928) ; *Ariadne by the Sea* (1933) ; *Collected Poems* (1939) ; *Return to Song* (1943).

*Sackville-West, Victoria* (The Hon. Mrs. Harold Nicolson) (1892).—Born at Sevenoaks. Awarded the Hawthornden

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Prize, 1927, for her modern Georgic, *The Land*. Contributor to numerous periodicals. Works include: *Poems of West and East* (1917); *Orchard and Vineyard* (1921); *The Land* (1926); *King's Daughter* (1929)—poems; *The Edwardians* (1930), *All Passion Spent* (1931), and *Family History* (1932)—novels; *Collected Poems*, Vol. I (1934); *The Dark Island* (1934)—a character-study; *The Garden* (1946).

*Salmon, Arthur Leslie*.—Poet of the West Country, essayist, prose-writer, and topographer. Contributor to numerous periodicals. Works include: *Songs of a Heart's Surrender* (1895); *Life of Life* (1897); *Lyrics and Verses* (1902); *West Country Verses* (1908); *The Cornwall Coast* (1910); *The Ferry of Souls*—prose sketches; *New Verse* (1929); *In Later Days* (1933); *Westward* (1936); *Swan Songs* (1938).

*Sassoon, Siegfried Loraine* (1886).—Educated Marlborough, and Clare College, Cambridge. Served in the War, in France and Palestine. Literary Editor of the *Daily Herald*, 1919. Awarded the Hawthornden Prize, 1929, and James Tait Black Memorial Prize for *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928). Works include: *The Old Huntsman* (1917); *War Poems* (1919); *Satirical Poems* (1926); *The Heart's Journey* (1928); *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930); *Sherston's Progress* (1936); *Vigils* (1936); *Complete Memoirs of George Sherston* (1937); *Rhymed Ruminations* (1940).

*Scott, Geoffrey* (1884–1929).—Educated Rugby, and New College, Oxford. Winner of the Newdigate, and in 1908 of the Chancellor Essay Prize. In 1909 first went to Florence, where he developed an ever-increasing interest in Italian architecture, especially the baroque. In 1927 went to America to edit the private Papers of James Boswell, which Colonel Isham had just purchased. First volume published in 1928, with a brilliant preface and notes, and eight further volumes were prepared for publication before Geoffrey Scott's sudden death. A brilliant conversationalist and raconteur. Works: *The Architecture of Humanism* (1914); *A Box of Paints* (1923); *Portrait of Zélide* (1925); *Poems* (1931).

*Shanks, Edward Buxton* (1892).—Poet, critic, and novelist. Born in London. Educated Merchant Taylor's School, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Editor of the *Granta*, 1912–1913. Served in the War and at the War Office. Awarded the first Hawthornden Prize for Imaginative Literature, 1919, for *The Queen of China and other Poems* (1919). Assistant Editor of the *London Mercury*, 1919–1932. Recreations—"conversation and the gramophone." Works include:

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*Songs* (1915) ; *Poems* (1916) ; *The Old Indispensables* (1919) ; *Island of Youth* (1921) ; *First Essays on Literature* (1923) ; *The Shadowgraph and other Poems* (1925) ; *Poems 1912-1932* (1933) ; *The Enchanted Village* (1933), and *Tom Tiddler's Ground* (1934)—fiction ; *My England* (1937) ; *A Study of Rudyard Kipling* (1938) ; *The Night-Watch for England* (1942).

*Sitwell, Edith* (1887).—Born at Scarborough. Educated privately. With her brothers edited *Wheels: an Annual Anthology of Modern Verse, 1916-1921*, in revolt against the popular poetry of the time. "In early youth took an intense dislike to simplicity, morris-dancing, a sense of humour, and every kind of sport except reviewer-baiting, and has continued these dislikes ever since." Awarded Medal of the Royal Society of Literature, 1934. Works include : *The Mother and other Poems* (1915) ; *Bucolic Comedies* (1923) ; *The Sleeping Beauty* (1924) ; *Troy Park* (1925) ; *Gold Coast Customs* (1929) ; *Collected Poems* (1930) ; *Alexander Pope* (1930) ; *The Pleasures of Poetry* (1931-1934) ; *Bath* (1932) ; *The English Eccentrics* (1933) ; *Aspects of Modern Poetry* (1934) ; *I Lived under a Black Sun* (1937) and *Spring Torrents* (1938)—fiction ; *Poems New and Old* (1941) ; *Street Songs* (1941) ; *A Poet's Notebook* (1943) ; *The Song of the Cold* (1945).

*Sitwell, Osbert* (1892).—Poet, playwright, novelist, and essayist. Born in London. Educated Eton. In the Grenadier Guards, 1913-1919. "Deeply interested in any manifestation of sport." Contributor to periodicals. *Recreations*—"entertaining the rich and charity generally." Works include : *Twentieth Century Harlequinade* (1916) ; *Argonaut and Juggernaut* (1919) ; *Out of the Flame* (1923) ; *Triple Fugue and other Stories* (1924) ; *Before the Bombardment* (1926)—a novel ; *England Reclaimed* (1927) ; *All at Sea* (1927)—a play ; *Dumb Animal and other Stories* (1930) ; *Collected Poems and Satires* (1931) ; *Miracle on Sinai* (1933)—a novel ; *Winters of Content* (1934) ; *Brighton* (with Margaret Barton) (1934) ; *Penny Foolish* (1935)—essays ; *Those Were the Days* (1938)—a novel ; *Left Hand! Right Hand!* (1945) and *The Scarlet Tree* (1946)—autobiography.

*Snaith, Stanley* (1903).—Writer and librarian. Educated Kendal, and privately. Contributor to various periodicals. Senior Assistant Librarian, Bethnal Green Public Library. Works include : *April Morning* (1926) ; *The Silver Scythe* (1933) ; *North* (1934) ; *Green Legacy* (1937) ; *Stormy Harvest* (1944).

*Spender, Harold Stephen* (1909).—Educated University College School, Hampstead, and University College, Oxford. Has travelled widely in Europe—two years in Germany after Oxford. Works : *Poems* (1933) ; *Vienna* (1934)—a



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poem ; *The Destructive Element* (1935)—criticism ; *The Trial of a Judge* (1938)—a verse-play ; *The Still Centre* (1939) ; *Ruins and Visions* (1942).

*Stephens, James* (1882).—Poet, novelist, and short-story writer. Born in Dublin. Spent his childhood in poverty, wandering over Ireland. Typist in a lawyer's office in Dublin, for a time. Irish life, scenery, character, and folklore are the material of his novels and poems. Works include : *Insurrections* (1909) ; *The Hill of Vision* (1912) ; *The Crock of Gold* (1912)—awarded the Polignac Prize ; *The Charwoman's Daughter* (1912) ; *The Demi-Gods* (1914) ; *Reincarnations* (1918) ; *Irish Fairy Tales* (1920) ; *Deirdre* (1923) ; *Collected Poems* (1926) ; *Etched in Moonlight* (1928)—short stories ; *Strict Joy* (1931).

*Strong, Leonard Alfred George* (1896).—Poet, novelist, short-story writer, and journalist. Born at Plympton. Three-parts Irish by birth. Educated Brighton College, and Wadham College, Oxford. For twelve years assistant master at Summerfields Preparatory School, Oxford. Associate Member of the Irish Academy of Letters. Recreations—"music, walking in the country, swimming, and talking dialect." Works include : *Dublin Days* (1921), *The Lowery Road*, *Difficult Love* (1927), and *Northern Lights*—poems ; *Dewey Rides*, *The English Captain*, *The Garden*, *The Brothers*, *Sea-Wall*, *Corporal Tune* (1934), and *The Seven Arms* (1935)—fiction ; *Laughter from the West* (1935), and *Call to the Swan* (1936)—poems ; *The Minstrel Boy* (1937)—biography ; *The Day was the Finest* (1938)—fiction.

*Struther, Jan* (Mrs. Joyce Maxtone Graham) (1901).—Educated London, privately. Has been contributing, since 1917, poems, articles, and short studies to various periodicals, including *Punch*, the *New Statesman*, the *Spectator*, and the *London Mercury*. Works : *Betsinda Dances and other Poems* (1931) ; *Sycamore Square and other Verses* (1932).

*Symons, Arthur* (1865–1945).—Writer of verse and prose. Born in Wales, of Cornish parentage. Educated various private schools. Editor of the *Savoy* (1896). Leader of the Symbolist movement in England. Recreations—hearing and playing music, seeing dancing. Works include : *An Introduction to the Study of Browning* (1886) ; *Days and Nights* (1889) ; *Silhouettes* (1892) ; *London Nights* (1895) ; *Amoris Victima* (1897) ; *Studies in Two Literatures* (1897) ; *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899) ; *Images of Good and Evil* (1900) ; *Collected Poems* (1901) ; *William Blake* (1907) ; *Cities of Italy* (1907) ; *Tragedies* (1916) ; *Cities and Sea Coasts*

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*and Islands* (1918); *Dramatis Personae* (1926); *Confessions* (1930); *Jezebel Mort and other Poems* (1931).

*Tessimond, Arthur Seymour John* (1902).—Born at Birkenhead, Cheshire. Educated Charterhouse and Liverpool University. Tried teaching for two terms; worked in bookshops for two years; has been a copywriter in London advertising agencies since 1928. Books of verse: *The Walls of Glass* (1934); *Voices in a Giant City* (1947).

*Thomas, Philip Edward* (1878–1917).—Educated St. Paul's School and Lincoln College, Oxford. Always a writer. Works include: *The Woodland Life* (1897)—nature studies; *Horae Solitariae* (1902); *The Heart of England*; *The South Country*; *Life of Richard Jefferies*; *Borrow* (1912); *Four and Twenty Blackbirds* (1915)—stories; *Poems* (1917); *The Last Sheaf* (1928)—prose fragments; *The Childhood of Edward Thomas* (1938)—a fragment of autobiography.

*Thomas, Gilbert Oliver* (1891).—Author and journalist. Editorial Staff Chapman and Hall, 1910–1914. Editor, *The Venturer*, 1919–1921. Contributor to various periodicals. Recreations—music, model railways. Works include: *Birds of Passage* (1912)—poems; *Towards the Dawn* (1918)—poems; *Things Big and Little* (1919)—essays; *Poems 1912–1919* (1920); *Mary of Huntingdon and other Poems* (1928); *John Masefield* (1932)—Modern Writers Series; *William Cowper and the Eighteenth Century* (1935); *Autobiography* (1946).

*Trench, Frederic Herbert* (1865–1923).—Poet and playwright. Born Avoncore, Co. Cork. Educated Haileybury and Keble College, Oxford. Board of Education Examiner, 1892–1909. Artistic director at the Haymarket Theatre, 1909–1911, where he staged *The Blue Bird*. Works: *Deirdre Wed and other Poems* (1900); *New Poems* (including *Apollo and the Seaman*) (1907); *Lyrics and Narrative Poems* (1911); *Poems, with Fables in Prose* (1918); *Napoleon, a Play* (1919); *Collected Works* (1924); *Selected Poems* (1924).

*Turner, Walter James* (1889–1946).—Born in China. Educated Scotch College, Melbourne, and privately in Munich and Vienna. Travelled in South Africa, Germany, Austria, Italy, 1910–1914. A commission in the R.G.A., 1916. Musical critic of the *New Statesman* since 1916. Dramatic critic of the *London Mercury*, 1919–1923. Literary Editor of the *Daily Herald*, 1920–1923. Recreation—music. Works include: *The Hunter and other Poems* (1917); *The Man who Ate the Popomack* (1922)—a play; *The Landscape of Cytherea* (1923)—poems; *The Seven Days of the Sun* (1925)—poems; *Beethoven* (1927); *New Poems* (1928); *The Pursuit of Psyche*

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(1931)—poems ; *Wagner* (1933) ; *Jack and Jill* (1934)—poems ; *Berlioz* (1934) ; *Blow for Balloons* (1935)—a novel ; *Songs and Incantations* (1936) ; *Mozart : the Man and His Work* (1937) ; *Poems 1916-36* (1939).

*Visiak, Edward Harold* (1878).—Works include : *Buccaneer Ballads* (1910) ; *The Haunted Island* (1910) ; *The Phantom Ship* (1912) ; *Brief Poems* (1919) ; *Milton Agonistes* (1923)—criticism ; *Medusa* (1929)—fiction ; *Selected Poems* (1936) ; *Introduction to the Masque of Comus* (1937) ; Editor *Nonesuch Press Milton* (1938).

*Warner, Sylvia Townsend* (1893).—Born in Middlesex. Studied music. Member of the Editorial Committee of *Tudor Church Music*. Contributor to *Grove's Dictionary of Music*. Works include : *The Espalier* (1925)—verse ; *Lolly Willows* (1926) and *Mr Fortune's Maggot* (1927)—fiction ; *Time Importuned* (1928)—poems ; *The True Heart* (1929)—fiction ; *Opus 7* (1931) and *Whether a Dove or Seagull* (in conjunction with Valentine Ackland) (1934)—poems ; *Summer Will Show* (1936)—fiction.

*Wellesley, Dorothy Violet* (Duchess of Wellington) (1889).—Daughter of Robert Ashton of Croughton, Cheshire (died 1899), and of the Countess of Scarborough. Brought up at Sandbeck Park, Yorkshire, and Lumley Castle, Co. Durham. No education, beyond a German governess and unlimited reading. Married, 1914, Lord Gerald Wellesley, son of the Duke of Wellington. British Embassies, Constantinople and Rome, until end of the War. Travelled in Egypt, India, Russia, and Persia. Hobbies, formerly hunting, etc., now gardening. Contributor to numerous periodicals and anthologies. Editor of "The Hogarth Living Poets" Series (1928-1932), and *The Annual* (1929). Works include : *Poems* (1920) ; *Lost Lane* (1925) ; *Genesis* (1926) ; *Deserted House* (1930) ; *Poems of Ten Years, 1924-1934* (1934) ; *Lost Planet* (1942) ; *Desert Wells* (1946).

*Whistler, Laurence* (1912).—Awarded the King's Medal for Poetry 1935. Works : *Armed October and other Poems* (1932) ; *Four Walls* (1934) ; *The Emperor Heart* (1936) ; *Sir John Vanbrugh* (1938)—biography ; *The Quick and the Dead* (1940) ; *Who Live in Unity* (1944).

*Wickham, Anna* (Edith Harper, Mrs. Patrick Hepburn) (1883).—Born at Sutton. Went to Australia at the age of six. With her mother, taught elocution in technical colleges under the Government. Returned to Europe, at the age of twenty-one, to become a stage vocalist. Studied at Tree's School of Acting, Conservatoire de Paris, and under De

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Reske. Married Patrick Hepburn, solicitor and astronomer. Works : *Songs by John Oland* ; *Contemplative Quarry* (1915) ; *The Man with a Hammer* (1916) ; *The Little Old House* (1921) ; *Thirty-six New Poems* (1936).

Wolfe, Humbert (1885-1940).—Born in Milan. Educated Bradford Grammar School, and Wadham College, Oxford. Entered the Civil Service, 1908. Principal Assistant Secretary, Minister of Labour. C.B.E., 1918. C.B., 1925. Contributor to numerous periodicals. Works include : *London Sonnets* (1920) ; *Kensington Gardens* (1924) ; *Humoresque* (1926) ; *Requiem* (1927) ; *This Blind Rose* (1928) ; *Dialogues and Monologues* (1928) ; *Snow* (1931) ; *Now a Stranger* (1933)—autobiography ; *Reverie of a Policeman* (1933) ; *Sonnets for Helen* (translated from Ronsard) (1933) ; *Portraits by Inference* (1934)—experiments in biography ; *The Fourth of August* (1936) ; *P.L.M.* (1936) ; *Don J. Ewan* (1937) ; *The Upward Anguish* (1938)—autobiography ; *Out of Great Tribulation* (1939).

Yeats, William Butler (1865-1939).—The leading figure in the Irish literary renaissance. Born in Dublin. Educated Godolphin School, Hammersmith, and Erasmus Smith School, Dublin. Art student for three years, but left art for literature. Helped to found the Irish National Theatre (1899), and has been a Director of the Abbey Theatre ever since, and has contributed to its repertory many noble plays in prose and verse. Senator of the Irish Free State since 1922. Awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, 1923. Works include : *The Wanderings of Oisín* (1889) ; *The Countess Cathleen* (1892) ; *The Celtic Twilight* (1893)—essays ; *Poems* (1895) ; *Prose*—Collected Edition—eight volumes (1908) ; *Plays for an Irish Theatre* (1912) ; *Later Poems* (1923) ; *The Tower* (1928) ; *The Winding Stair* (1933) ; *Collected Poems* (1933) ; *Collected Plays* (1934) ; *Wheels and Butterflies* (1934)—plays ; *A Vision* (1935) ; *A Full Moon in March* (1936) ; *Collected Poems* (1936) ; Editor *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse* (1937) ; *A Vision* (1937) ; *The Herne's Egg*, (1938)—a play ; *Last Poems and Plays* (1940).

Young, Andrew (1885).—Born in Elgin. Educated at the Royal High School and the University of Edinburgh. Works include : *Boaz and Ruth* (1920) ; *The Cuckoo Clock* (1922) ; *Thirty-One Poems* (1922) ; *The New Shepherd* (1931) ; *Winter Harvest* (1933) ; *The White Blackbird* (1936) ; *Collected Poems* (1936) ; *Nicodemus : A Play in Verse* (1937) ; *Speak to the Earth* (1940).



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## WORDS

Oh words, Oh words, and shall you rule  
The world? What is it but the tongue  
That doth proclaim a man a fool,  
So that his best songs go unsung,  
So that his dreams are sent to school  
And all die young.

There pass the trav'ling dreams, and these  
My soul adores—my words condemn—  
Oh, I would fall upon my knees  
To kiss their golden garments' hem,  
Yet words do lie in wait to seize  
And murder them.

16

To-night the swinging stars shall plumb  
The silence of the sky. And herds  
Of plumèd winds like huntsmen come  
To haunt with dreams the restless birds.  
To-night the moon shall strike you dumb,  
Oh words, Oh words. . . .

STELLA BENSON

## SECOND INTERLUDE

SPOKEN BEFORE "ARDVORLICH'S WIFE"

THESE are not visions of romance,  
Nor dreams (begotten by longing and chance) 20

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Of a richer life, a fairer place  
Than this fair earth : they seek to trace  
In true and violent things that were done  
In years long over, by men long gone  
The impulses of spirits like ours,  
The sources of forgotten powers  
Engendered by the wild earth's touch  
And lost to us by overmuch  
Contact and crowding and modishness  
That blunt our apprehensiveness.

10

We tell of things that once were news,  
Such as the press now soils for its use ;  
But we look beyond the accident  
Of a thing that happened for the thing it meant.  
To mimic the murder or the kiss  
Tells us nothing of what it is  
In the significance of the heart.  
We need to meditate apart  
From the imitation of something seen—  
To ask of deeds that once have been  
What they were destined to come to mean  
In the spirits of those who suffered and did,  
And in our spirits in which are hid  
The same dim forces, which all inherit.

20

Which of us has seen a spirit ?  
We have no belief to bring us near it :  
Yet in the world of poetry  
We can admit such things may be,  
And in the possibility  
Receive enlarged experience  
Of beauty and the interior sense  
Of man's most intimate dealing with man.

30

Here, moving in the little span  
Of this loved stage, you shall not see

## UNCONQUERABLE

The day's externe reality.  
Poetry wills that you shall hear  
The implications of all fear,  
All terror and joy, that shall express  
In earnest grievous life no less  
Than an inmost essence of loveliness.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

## UNCONQUERABLE

HOMER and Milton blind, Beethoven deaf,  
And Collins mad and Savage famishing,  
And Marlowe huddled into a forgotten grave,  
And Chatterton—and sorrows everywhere      10  
Loading the witless air :

Calamity and Death hunt the same wood,  
One strikes if other misses ; neither rests,  
Making of Eden daily desolation,  
A bloody amphitheatre of Earth,  
Cinders of April turf.

The enemies of Poetry, the fierce thieves  
Of beauty's and creation's miracle,  
Twin Cæsars ravaging their captived Kingdoms,  
For envy slaying what else lives undecaying,      20  
Or maiming without slaying. . . .

If there were worser ills than Death to dream of,  
Worse pangs than hunger's and the numbèd sense,  
If even the long foul solitude of the grave  
Ended not other griefs of other men,  
And other fears ; even then

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Poetry needs must breathe through lips of man  
Desperate defiance and immortal courage,  
Needs must hope bicker in his burning eye,  
And Death and hunger, madness and despite,  
Sink sullenly from sight.

JOHN FREEMAN

### PROLOGUE

SPOKEN BEFORE "THE SINGING SANDS"

IN the beginning was the Word : then began man's  
thought.

And the word is with God, by it He is still creating.  
The power that is in man's utterance man has lately  
forgot.

Thought has denied the part that sound has in thought's  
shaping.

In the young years of the earth man desired to con-  
template 10

His defeats and victories, joys and agonies, beginning  
and ending :

To act these on a stage was a holy ceremony, an aid  
To the worship of the Forces that maintain us,  
stricken or contented.

By this ennobling art man's bodily lovelinesses  
(That are uncontrolled accidents, either to inspire or  
hurt)

Were seen, like those of the soul, to be every man's  
possession

In the influence of the Word, and of movement born  
of the Word.

## PROLOGUE

First in the Word, and last in the Word was their  
belief :

Colour and form and tone were theirs, but in its  
service ;

Sound was theirs, but sound enriched by the texture  
of speech

And, governed by ordered rhythm of speech, to music  
turning.

To such a lovely labour we would have dedicated  
Our days and selves, our passion and all we can  
achieve—

To present honourable beings or shattered beings  
and degraded

Seeming worthy alike in the enlargement brought by  
the deed.

But the ancient theatre of adoration and beauty  
revered,

In which the fate of man was faced and borne and  
softened

By watching its devout imitation, its law made clear,  
Is taken away from us who would serve it, and from  
our longing.

We and our kind have been homeless, we have not  
known what to do

To bring to expression the impulses hidden in us by  
our fathers,

Till a poet and master of power in his power, in the  
hour and mood

Of creating, has seen a purpose for us : to the Word  
he has hearkened.

The Word is in him for guide. It is the living source  
Of the old august celebration which is despised and  
over :

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

We assemble here in its name, he has unlocked and  
restored

This house of the Word for us, new and yet not other.

Now to the old great art of the drama of moving  
speech,

And of movement looking to speech for grace and  
divine intention,

We address ourselves in your presence : in satisfying  
our need

We would speak to a need in you for our ancient way  
with no ending.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

### I HAVE HEARD VOICES UNDER THE EARLY STARS

I HAVE heard voices under the early stars  
Where, among hills, the cold roads glimmer white,—  
Voices of shadows passing, each to the other,  
Clear in the airy stillness 10  
Call their familiar greeting and Good-night.

Were they not come as guests to a remembered room,  
Those words, surrounded by the befriending silence?  
But words, ah, words—who can tell what they are  
made of,

Or how inscrutably shaped to colour and bloom?  
Sharp odours they breathe, and bitter and sweet and  
strong,

Born from exultation, endurance, and desire;  
Flying from mind to mind, to bud a thought again,  
Spring, and in endless birth their wizard power prolong.

There was a voice on a sun-shafted stair 20  
That sang ; I heard it singing :

## I HAVE HEARD VOICES

The very trees seemed listening to their roots  
Out in the sunshine, and like drops in light  
The words rained on the grasses greenly springing.

Ah, lovely living words, what have we done to you ?  
Each infant thought a soul exulting to be born  
Into a body, a breath breathed from the lips, a  
word

Dancing, tingling, pulsing, a body fresh as dew !  
Once in the bonds of use manacled and confined  
How have we made you labour, thinned from beauty  
and strength,  
Dulled with our dullness, starved to the apathy of a  
serf, 10  
Outcast in streets, abandoned foundlings of the mind !

Yet once, in stillness of night's stillest hour,  
Words from the page I read  
Rose like a spirit to embrace my spirit.  
Their radiant secret shook me : earth was new ;  
And I throbbed, like one wakened from the dead.

O swift words, words like flames, proud as a victor's  
eye,  
Words armed and terrible, storming the heart, sending  
Waves of love, and fear, and accusation over  
Peoples,—kindling, changing ! Alas, but can you  
die, 20  
Hardened to wither round the thought wherein you  
grew ?  
Become as the blind leading with slow shuffle the  
blind,  
Heavy like senseless stones the savage kneels before ?  
O shamed, O victim words, what have we done to  
you ?

LAURENCE BINYON



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### THE BIRTHRIGHT

*THE miracle of our land's speech—so known  
And long received, none marvel when 'tis shown!*

We have such wealth as Rome at her most pride  
Had not or (having) scattered not so wide ;  
Nor with such arrant prodigality  
Beneath her any pagan's foot let lie. . . .  
Lo ! Diamond that cost some half their days  
To find and t'other half to bring to blaze:  
Rubies of every heat, wherethrough we scan  
The fiercer and more fiery heart of man : 10  
Emerald that with the uplifted billow vies,  
And Sapphires evening remembered skies :  
Pearl perfect, as immortal tears must show,  
Bred, in deep waters, of a piercing woe ;  
And tender Turkis, so with charms y-writ,  
Of woven gold, Time dares not bite on it.  
Thereafter, in all manners worked and set,  
Jade, coral, amber, crystal, ivories, jet,—  
Showing no more than various fancies, yet,  
Each a Life's token or Love's amulet. . . . 20  
Which things, through timeless arrogance of use,  
We neither guard nor garner, but abuse ;  
So that our scholars—nay, our children—fling  
In sport or jest treasure to arm a King ;  
And the gross crowd, at feast or market, hold  
Traffic perforce with dust of gems and gold !

RUDYARD KIPLING

### ON MEMORY

No tribe has built a shrine to Memory  
Nor carved an image dreaming in her name

## ON MEMORY

Above the rocks, where twice a day the sea  
May pour a music at her altar flame ;  
An image curled to listen like a shell  
Rounded with sound upon the ocean brim,  
A subtle coil of coral that can tell  
The echoes floating in the seafall dim.

Yet she is eldest of the goddesses.  
She makes our flesh ring softly, like a bell  
Shaken by passing feet. No words can tell  
Why man should find her murmuring so sweet. 10

In the coiled ashy nerveways of the brain  
This goddess has her shrine.  
Sound dies in breaking waves of pain  
Before she takes her echoes thin and fine ;  
And the eye's gateway sifts all coloured light,  
The nostril's gateway separates all fume,  
Before those echoes, born on the mind-spume,  
Come to the altar where she dwells, smiling in ordered  
night.

She doth undo her delicate sweet door  
With subtle keys. No human sound can tell 20  
Of that fresh light and ancient sorrow-bell  
Tolling remotely as we tread her floor  
(Mazed yet as simple as a ball of dew)  
Among the wandering echoes blowing through.

She harvests for the autumn of the mind,  
Bringing all home beneath an evening light,  
Storing it gently at the open doors  
That cannot shut against the coming night ;  
There, in the lingering day  
The mind may pause, and play 30  
A little while with toys of garnered touch and sight.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

The dragon and the daisy of Atlantis  
She hath drawn in : and still the harvest goes  
Between the eager doorways of the senses,  
And she weaves it into echoes as it flows.  
Her curved powers rise and go like light  
Into the future, dark devouring bright,  
Like half a rainbow lost  
In cloud and half by woods and cities crossed.  
She knows the future, with its death of warmth and light.

But when this comes, and all the stars are dead,      10  
Hidden behind the drifting star-mote sheet,  
When final snowstorms cover palaces  
And men creep down within steel cliffs for heat  
But cannot cheat the old,  
Returned and creeping cold—  
Then Memory shall undo her doorway dim and sweet,  
And wait alone within man's freezing brain  
While all his story closes like a flower ;  
Faithfully garnering his final pain  
With courage, godhead, beauty, in their hour ;      20  
And for the final time  
His soul shall hear her bell of sorrow chime  
And know her light of freshness and her calming power.

No more, oh nevermore  
(So tolls the bell across the slowly darkening floor)  
No more, O harvest fine  
Your wave shall wash the doorway of the shrine  
In the last man's cold skull, the goddess Past,  
Shut in by dark, by furry frost, shall sleep at last.

STELLA GIBBONS

## MERU

CIVILIZATION is hooped together, brought      30  
Under a rule, under the semblance of peace

## CIVILIZATION

By manifold illusion ; but man's life is thought,  
And he, despite his terror, cannot cease  
Ravening through century after century,  
Ravening, raging, and uprooting that he may come  
Into the desolation of reality :  
Egypt and Greece good-bye, and good-bye, Rome !  
Hermits upon Mount Meru or Everest,  
Caverned in night under the drifted snow,  
Or where that snow and winter's dreadful blast  
Beat down upon their naked bodies, know 10  
That day brings round the night, that before dawn  
His glory and his monuments are gone.

W. B. YEATS

## CIVILIZATION

I WEIGH the piles of Babylon  
Against a morning bird's shrill cry,  
When the dawn-wind flutes alone  
Under the pearl-blue misty sky.

I weigh the mounds of coffined coin,  
Buried in vaults, bases of towers,  
Against the gossamer threads that join  
The petals of pale Autumn flowers. 20

The brazen and the iron house  
Are rooted amid skulls and bones,  
But the Sun's joy sings luminous,  
And dances through his crystal zones.

Beyond the hills of Corylande  
The violet evening weaves a star  
That burns immaculate and bland—  
What ant-hills Time's dark cities are !  
WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### CONTINUITY

BANKERS at war  
That gold may rule  
Dim lives that should be free,  
Space circular,  
And Faith gone cool,  
And Time a mystery. . . .  
But from some old and plain delights  
No puzzles shall me sever :  
Love's act could speak  
When Greek met Greek ;  
Some joys are good for ever.

10

Rose in her bower  
Of thorn and leaf  
Growing through history  
Smells for an hour  
As sweet as brief  
And for eternity.  
Fishing in history's murmuring tarn  
Whence echo ceases never,  
With Thought for cast  
I'll catch the past  
And stay by it for ever.

20

Roses were old  
And wit was salt  
With Ulysses at sea  
Long before gold  
Made thought a fault  
Heavy in mine and me.  
Serene by rose and murmuring tarn  
No banking laws can sever,  
My senses share  
The warm Greek air  
Sweet once, and so for ever.

30

STELLA GIBBONS

## IN THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

### HERALDRY

Who curbed the lion long ago  
And penned him in this towering field  
And reared him wingless in the sky?  
And quenched the dragon's burning eye,  
Chaining him here to make a show,  
The faithful guardian of the shield?

A fabulous wave far back in Time  
Flung these calm trophies to this shore  
That looks out on a different sea.  
These relics of a buried war, 10  
Empty as shape and cold as rhyme,  
Gaze now on fabulous wars to be.

So well the storm must have fulfilled  
Its task of perfect overthrow  
That this new world to them must seem  
Irrecognizably the same,  
And looking from the flag and shield  
They see the self-same road they know.

Here now heraldic watch them ride  
This path far up the mountain-side 20  
And backward never cast a look;  
Ignorant that the dragon died  
Long since and that the mountain shook  
When the great lion was crucified.

EDWIN MUIR

## IN THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

He carved the red deer and the bull  
Upon the smooth cave rock,



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Returned from war with belly full,  
And scarred with many a knock,  
He carved the red deer and the bull  
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,  
The clouds wild trumpets blew,  
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,  
Flowers with dream faces grew  
Up to the sky, and softly hung  
Golden and white and blue.

10

The woman ground her heap of corn,  
Her heart a guarded fire ;  
The wind played in his trembling soul  
Like a hand upon a lyre,  
The wind drew faintly on the stone  
Symbols of his desire :

The red deer of the forests dark,  
Whose antlers cut the sky,  
That vanishes into the mirk  
And like a dream flits by,  
And by an arrow slain at last  
Is but the wind's dark body.

20

The bull that stands in marshy lakes  
As motionless and still  
As a dark rock jutting from a plain  
Without a tree or hill,  
The bull that is the sign of life,  
Its sombre, phallic will.

And from the dead, white eyes of them  
The wind springs up anew,  
It blows upon the trembling heart,  
And bull and deer renew

30

## ROMAN HEADSTONE

Their flitting life in the dim past  
When that dead Hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,  
And, fingering his red stone,  
I chase through endless forests dark  
Seeking that thing unknown,  
That which is not red deer or bull,  
But which by them was shown :

By those stiff shapes in which he drew  
His soul's exalted cry,  
When flying down the forest dark  
He slew and knew not why,  
When he was filled with song, and strength  
Flowed to him from the sky.

10

The wind blows from red deer and bull,  
The clouds wild trumpets blare,  
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,  
Flowers with dream faces stare—

*O, Hunter, your own shadow stands  
Within your forest lair !*

20

W. J. TURNER

## ROMAN HEADSTONE

*JULIA, carissima Julia,*  
Strange how you hold a beauty for me now,  
As though no sixteen centuries had dimmed your  
charm,  
When only crusted stones remain to trace  
Your exile life, here where I seek not balm  
To heal such wounds of body as once scarred your lord,  
But silence for my mind and peace for hands  
That they may cease their restless artifice  
And stretch at ease in tendrils and grass strands !

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

*Julia, carissima Julia,*  
Strange that no woman bears the likeness now  
That you have set upon my tablet mind,  
Not in obliterated text as here  
*In perpetuum ave* carved I find,  
A valediction lichenised and broken !  
Beyond what ultimate are you ? I ponder.  
*In perpetuum ave atque vale.*

Julia, where do you wander ?

JOHN GAWSWORTH

### A SAXON SONG

Tools with the comely names, 10  
Mattock and scythe and spade,  
Couth and bitter as flames,  
Clean, and bowed in the blade,—  
A man and his tools make a man and his trade.

Breadth of the English shires,  
Hummock and kame and mead,  
Tang of the reeking byres,  
Land of the English breed,—  
A man and his land make a man and his creed.

Leisurely flocks and herds, 20  
Cool-eyed cattle that come  
Mildly to wonted words,  
Swine that in orchards roam,—  
A man and his beasts make a man and his home.

Children sturdy and flaxen  
Shouting in brotherly strife,  
Like the land they are Saxon,  
Sons of a man and his wife,—  
For a man and his loves make a man and his life.

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST

## THE GOTHIC ROSE

### THE LAST ABBOT OF GLOUCESTER

THE Middle Ages sleep in alabaster  
A delicate fine sleep. They never knew  
The irreparable hell of that disaster,  
That broke with hammers Heaven's fragile blue.

Yea, crowned and robed and silent he abides,  
Last of the Romans, and that ivory calm,  
Beneath whose wings august the minster-sides  
Trembled like virgins to the perfect Psalm.

Yea, it is gone with him, yea, it returns not ;  
The gilt proud sanctuaries are dust, the high 10  
Steam of the violet fragrant frankincense burns not :  
All gone ; it was too beautiful to die.

It was too beautiful to live ; the world  
Ne'er rotted it with her slow-creeping hells :  
Men shall not see the Vision crowned and pearled,  
When Jerusalem blossomed in the noon-tide bells !

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## THE GOTHIC ROSE

AMID the blue smoke of gem-glassed chapels  
You shall find Me, the white five-wounded Flower,  
The Rose of Sarras. Yea, the moths have eaten,  
And fretted the gold cloths of the Duke of York, 20  
And lost is the scarlet cloak of the Cardinal Beaufort ;  
Tapers are quenched and rods of silver broken,  
Where once King Richard dined beneath the leopards:  
But think you that any beautifulness is wasted,  
With which Mine angels have blessed the blue-eyed  
English,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Twining into stone an obscure dream of Heaven,  
A crown of flinty spines about the Rose,  
A slim flame blessing the Coronal of Thorns ?  
And York is for ever the White Rose of Mary,  
And Lancaster is dipt in the Precious Blood,  
Though the high shrine that was built by the king of  
the Romans

Be down at Hayles, and the abbey of Saint Mary  
Be shattered now in three-towered Eboracum.

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## ALAS ! POOR QUEEN

SHE was skilled in music and the dance  
And the old arts of love 10  
At the court of the poisoned rose  
And the perfumed glove,  
And gave her beautiful hand  
To the pale Dauphin  
A triple crown to win—  
And she loved little dogs  
And parrots  
And red-legged partridges  
And the golden fishes of the Duc de Guise  
And a pigeon with a blue ruff 20  
She had from Monsieur d'Elbœuf.

Master John Knox was no friend to her ;  
She spoke to him soft and kind,  
Her honeyed words were Satan's lure  
The unwary soul to bind.  
“ Good sir, doth a lissome shape  
And a comely face  
Offend your God His Grace  
Whose Wisdom maketh these  
Golden fishes of the Duc de Guise ? ” 30



## OPENING CHORUS

She rode through Liddesdale with a song ;  
“ Ye streams sae wondrous strang,  
Oh, mak’ me a wrack as I come back  
But spare me as I gang.”  
While a hill-bird cried and cried  
Like a spirit lost  
By the grey storm-wind tost.

Consider the way she had to go,  
Think of the hungry snare,  
The net she herself had woven, 10  
Aware or unaware,  
Of the dancing feet grown still,  
The blinded eyes—  
Queens should be cold and wise,  
And she loved little things,  
Parrots,  
And red-legged partridges,  
And the golden fishes of the Duc de Guise,  
And the pigeon with the blue ruff  
She had from Monsieur d’Elbœuf. 20

MARION ANGUS

## OPENING CHORUS

### FOR A NOAH PLAY

STAND with us here  
On the south-western cliff of the great Jurassic escarp-  
ment,  
A common for rare wood-larks, a place where wind-  
pumps veer  
Constant as your necessity, drinking that reservoir  
Free to all : invisible the veins it is life to open,  
The lake only your death may look on.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Stand with us now and hear  
Only the wood-lark's irrelevant song, the shepherd's  
whistle,  
And seven-league footfall of wind striding through dry  
grasses.  
For as yet the torrents to come are but a roaring in the  
ear  
Of prophets, or the raving fancy of one delirious with  
thirst.  
Pacific the sky, a delight for shepherds and hikers ;  
though a seer  
Might behold over the cities to north and north-east  
spreading  
A stain, clouds not white, the coaling-up of wrath.

Stand with us here.  
 Feel underfoot the linked vertebrae of your land    10  
 Stretching north to the far fells, the head of rivers.  
 Prehistory sleeps below in many beds. Before  
 Man set a value on his thoughts or made a prison for fear,  
 These hills were grown up, to the sky happily married,  
 That now are wrinkled with the rains of more than  
     mortal years,  
 Old enough to remember the first birds and the great  
     reptiles.

Stand with us. Far and near  
See history unfolded in the scrolled hills, her secret  
Indelible as hieroglyphs stamped on their stone, clear  
To the eye but hard for you to interpret. The green  
barrows 20  
Of Britons. The high camps where Roman eagles  
kept watch  
On Wales unblinking. The manors, cosy in combes.  
Dear  
The dewponds, and still black the circles of Jubilee  
bonfires.

## OPENING CHORUS

Stand with us here,  
The past at your feet, your fingers nervous like the  
lark's wing  
To be up and doing. And now, for to-day's sun goes  
higher,  
Let your hearts grow warm as wax to take note of the  
future :  
Let him step forward, if one there be wise to weather,  
From behaviour of martens or altered tones of the  
smooth-voiced weir  
Able to learn and to beware.

Now look away  
Into the valley and deep into the unregarded  
Sweat that has made it fertile. That curve of plough-  
land see 10  
As a graph of history, and hear what the young corn  
tries to say.  
Read between those furrows a desperate appeal  
Of men who had no other voice.

Now look beyond, this way.  
Behold a different growth : set in ancient wood,  
Grafted on to the valley stock, a new life—the Town.  
Consider the uniform foliage of roofs, hiding decay  
And rain-fearing pests and all the diversities of loving :  
Wind-screens dazzled by the sun : strip-built roads  
that stray  
Out like suckers to drain the country ; and routes  
familiar 20  
To night-expresses, the fire-crest flyers, migrating  
south.

Now come away  
From these self-flattering heights, and like a diver  
plunging  
Into his own image, enter the Town. You pass

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Nurseries that splash crude colour over war's pale  
    griefs,  
Nurturing seed for a soil shallow as soldiers' graves :  
Huts, the butt-ends of a war, Honour's sloven retreat ;  
And ashamed asphalt where the naked put on in-  
    difference—to-day  
Willowherb grows in the cracks, the idiot flower of  
    exhaustion.

Now closer look this way.  
Do not be deceived by the two-faced traffic signs, the  
    expensive  
Flood-lit smile of civic beauties, the fountains that  
    play  
In limelight like spoilt children. See rather how the  
    old  
Their wintering ghosts creep out on gusts of warm  
    nostalgia :  
The young, their run-ahead hope barred by Death's  
    one-way  
Approach : and the good like madmen preaching to  
    locked faces.

Look not away—  
Though ugly this, it is your foundation and your  
    predicament.  
Behind the image of glass, the mirage of brick, you  
    await  
A judgment and a choice. But listen for that which  
    is still  
Less than the whisper of clouds assembling, of arrows  
    falling.  
But look to him we will call Noah, figure of your  
    fate,  
Him understand, him obey.

C. DAY LEWIS





## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Come back, limp wings !  
The first bird sings  
With round chest puff'd against the sky,  
And smally blinks at the beginning breeze.  
Would we were closer to such things,—  
The innocent concerns of bird and feather ;  
Forbidden heaven, must we forfeit these ?  
But come, my failures, let us go together  
Out of the light, let us away ;  
Justly we are expell'd ; this day-shone earth 10  
Mocks at our cunning, and we stay  
But to provide unseemly mirth  
For traitors, wild with holiday.  
Look at the dew,  
The slowly-focussing land,  
The opening fields in rustic smock of grey ;  
Oh, they will never understand  
How near to death they lay,  
But in dull simpleness their journal tasks renew.  
There is no fear in Nature ; though I spin 20  
Each night a different net of sin,  
Foreknowing my defeat  
She sleeps, then wakes  
And shakes  
The dun gauze of her loveliness  
Over the morning, sieving out the stars,  
Then hastens to repeat  
The tedious conventions of rebuilding day.  
Come, my poor lions, gather up your hate ;  
Out of the world with you, 30  
Into the pit with you, out of the sun :—  
Self-foil'd, there's the disgrace, we are self-foil'd.  
One of our number, working our own plan !  
Henceforth content yourselves with single combat,  
For know, mankind can only be assailed  
Through the weak individual, soul by soul,  
Stolen, devour'd ; his mind, collectively,

## GO THE LONG WAY, THE LONG WAY HOME

Cannot be scratch'd—  
Witness the strange futility of war.  
Death was our ally long ago,  
I say long, long ago, for now we are betrayed.  
Our murders have not still'd the thrush,  
Nor to the white hills brought decay ;  
Our hope had swollen to a cloud,  
But now it weeps, and rains away.  
Come back into the dark, my soldiers.

CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

## GO THE LONG WAY, THE LONG WAY HOME

Go the long way, the long way home. 10  
Over this gate and that lean, at the three lanes'  
meeting delay,  
Look well at that field of hay, eye closely the drilled  
loam,  
Finger the springing corn, count every petal  
Of the hedge rose and the guelder rose.  
Under the bosom of the blossomed elder stay,  
Delay, linger, browse deep on all this green and all  
this growing,  
Slant cheek to the sweet air, with deep greeting survey  
The full-leaved boughs like water flowing,  
The corn-waves hurrying uphill as the wind blows.  
Look overhead into the blue, look round, 20  
Watch this bird fly and that bird settle,  
With slow treading and sure greet the assuring ground:  
Go slowly, for slowly goes this midsummer day,  
And this is the last time you will come this way.

Go the long way, the long way home.  
Aye, and when you've arrived and the sighing gate  
falls to,  
Go slowly, go heedfully your garden through.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Breathe in the spice pinks, turn face up to the soft  
Ripe rose that wags aloft,  
Nod to the old rake, rub thumb along the spade's edge,  
Measure the potato hills and the tall bean rows,  
Pledge cherry and currant bush, pledge lily and lily  
leaf spear  
And rebel the nettles waving along the hedge ;  
Look closely, look well,  
See how your garden grows,  
Ponder yourself even into the secret cell  
Of this year's honeycomb : 10  
Look long, for long has this been yours and long been  
dear,  
And this is the last time you will stand here.

Go the long way, the long way home.  
Though you are weary, hasten not ghost to ground,  
Tarry this last hour out, take your last look round,  
Greet finally the earth, greet leaf and root and stock.  
Stand in your last hour poised, like the dandelion clock—  
Frail ghost of the gaudy raggle-taggle that you were—  
Stand up, O homing phantom, stand up intact and  
declare  
The goodness of earth the greatest good you found, 20  
Ere the wind jolts you, and you vanish like the foam.  
SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

## THE CORNER STONE

STERILE these stones  
By time in ruin laid.  
Yet many a creeping thing  
Its haven has made  
In these least crannies, where falls  
Dark's dew, and noonday shade.

## THE SNARE

The claw of the tender bird  
Finds lodgment here ;  
Dye-winged butterflies poise ;  
Emmet and beetle steer  
Their busy course ; the bee  
Drones, laden, near.

Their myriad-mirrored eyes  
Great day reflect.  
By their exquisite farings  
Is this granite specked ;  
Is trodden to infinite dust ;  
By gnawing lichens decked.

10

Toward what eventual dream  
Sleeps its cold on,  
When into ultimate dark  
These lives shall be gone,  
And even of man not a shadow remain  
Of all he has done ?

WALTER DE LA MARE

## THE SNARE

FAR away and long ago  
This trouble at my heart began :  
Ere Eden perished like a flower,  
Or Eve had shed her tears an hour,  
Or Adam knew himself a man,  
In every leaf of every tree  
Beauty had set a snare for me.

20

Far away and long ago  
Her loveliest song began to chime.  
Bright Hector fell, and at the stroke  
Ten thousand hearts like mine awoke

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

In every age and every clime.  
She stood bestriding Time and Space  
Amid the stars, and lit the rose  
With scent and colour, and she chose  
My country for a dwelling place,  
And set a snare in every tree  
Awaiting me, awaiting me !

EDWARD DAVISON

## THE VAGRANT SCHOLAR

THE golden sunshine crept upon my book  
And changed the pages to diminishing fields,  
The words to bushes where the thrushes sang. 10  
I wandered back where I had been before,  
Page after page, enchanted with the grass,  
The flowering hedgerow and the scented branch,  
The rills with voice of linnets, and the birds  
With music as of hidden waters tumbling  
Through stones and mosses into secret pools.  
I looked upon the wisest words again  
And saw the sowers at their ancient work  
Along the furrows gleaming through the clay.  
The seed of thought, and seed for human bread,  
Eternal beauty and immediate need, 21  
Were scattered there before my hungry eyes  
In that inspired confusion of the sun.

RICHARD CHURCH

## BROOK NOSTALGIA

OH, I would go away and fire my eyes,  
Get a new brain, and woo the gravel flies,  
And make a glow-worm pillow of my sighs !



## FAMILIARITY

Forget, forget—where alder roots cling wet.  
Where water runs I can a year forget.  
The empty brain grows pleasuring ears and eyes.  
See, watch, suspend. Just that, and gild my nose,  
Mindless as hern or otter, in the sun's throes,  
Where rock-moss drips, where water gleams and flows.  
Grey is my heart, and grey the face of thee.  
These chopine heels set not the pace for me.  
Where winds walk warily I cannot see.  
But by the ivied bridge the dun-flies gleam ;                    10  
The brown trout turns his speckles to the stream,  
And small stones stun my dark street-troubled dream.  
Only where water runs I can forget.  
Fins, little wings and pebbles pearl Time's net.  
What sometimes was, came oft, and shall be yet.

HERBERT PALMER

## FAMILIARITY

DANCE not your spectral dance at me ;  
    I know you well !  
Along this lane there lives no tree  
    But I can tell.  
I know each fall and rise and twist ;                    20  
You—why, a wildflower in the mist,  
    The moon, the mist.  
Sound not that long alarm, gray tower,  
    I know you well ;  
This is your habit at this hour,  
    You and your bell !  
If once, I heard a hundred times  
Through evening's ambuscade your chimes—  
    Dark tower, your chimes.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Enforce not that no-meaning so,  
Familiar stream ;  
Whether you tune it high or low,  
I know your theme ;  
A proud-fed but a puny rill,  
A meadow brook, poured quick and shrill—  
Alone and shrill.

Sprawl not so monster-like, blind mist ;  
I know not " seems " ;  
I am too old a realist 10  
To take sea-dreams  
From you, or think a great white Whale  
Floats through our hawthorn-scented vale—  
This foam-cold vale.

EDMUND BLUNDEN

## EVENING

THE burden of these beauties is too much.  
They strain my passion for mortality.  
They ring my world with falsity of touch  
As fingers can the far dim rims of sea.  
They overcrowd with their reality  
The small and casual places of the brain, 20  
Till what is edged most passionately with me  
Is lost too easily for errant pain.

Empty the sack of this too varied sky  
Of sails and lights and children. Let there lie  
A vacant vastness of expectancy  
As in the mind before the last dreams free.  
Let doom be everywhere the sign of grace,  
And each thing stand for death in its true place.

L. AARONSON

*Rapallo*

## CLOSE AKIN MY WARRIORS ARE

### THE GOLDEN SPIDER IN THE MIND

HERE's a bent tree :  
Hated and loved it, have I, years in turn ;  
Cool fan-flake roof and dappled root in fern,  
What do they say for me ?  
This only : here  
I stood alone, once, in a vanished year,  
Imagining  
A most vain thing.

Mark Folly well :  
But her divine disguising 10  
Who may tell ?  
What golden spider in the mind, devising  
How he should fling his unseen filmy rope,  
Chanced here to shed  
On trembling beech-twigg tender overhead  
His skein of airy hope ?  
On that day I  
Lay leafy-lost, sun-spel,  
Till greenlight fled  
And the sky whispered, and a web was spun 20  
Never to be undone.

Bent tree,  
O hatred part of me,  
By what an iron cord you bind me now  
Fast to your bitter bough !

GEOFFREY SCOTT

## CLOSE AKIN MY WARRIORS ARE

CLOSE akin my warriors are ;  
From the humming bird that swings

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

All a-quiver, like a star  
In a radiance of quick wings—  
—To the tiger mountains, stricken  
    Into stillness by a breaking  
    Curse ; behold, they stir and quicken,  
    Gods shall tremble at their waking. . . .  
Lo, my warriors, close akin,  
An impregnable alliance.  
    *Drop thy sword and thy defiance,*  
    *Bow thy head and let them in.*

STELLA BENSON 10

## THEY WILL COME BACK

THEY will come back, the quiet days,  
Rosemary, myrtle, lavender,  
And spring returning, leaf by leaf,  
To the quiet heart, the single mind.

Not with the slow septennial change,  
The steady pulse, or the iron tide ;  
With the curfew dove, the quiet bell,  
It will not come, the harvest-home.

They will not come, the gentian days,  
With the cornfield white in summer, or the long 20  
Provençal noon, but with the autumnal storm,  
Strikes in the north, and random shots.

They will come back, the strenuous days,  
On Peteret Ridge, the Eagle Nest,  
And cross the gap of trivial time  
Sure as the wind, the night express.

Through bombs and teargas, through the acute  
Machine-gun rattling answer, strict  
Self-knowledge, dark rebellion, death

## PLOUGHING

In the shuttered streets, through barricades,  
And doors flung open in the wind,  
They will come back.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## PLOUGHING

GRUDGING of daylight were those winter hours,  
And spring a gleam of flower in the mind.  
The earth had staled with bearing, but again  
The loth soil must be mellowed with dung  
And opened for new sowing.

When the east  
Had drained the last twilight from the low places  
And birds shook the stillness loose, the ploughman 10  
Had scored his second groove on the field.  
The horses muscled forward without the whip,  
But quick to answer to his mastery  
Who weighed the give of soil and rip of share,  
Trusting the nervous needle of his instinct  
To point the furrows straight.

At the turn  
He eased the team about, doled the angle  
To keep the just span of the parallels ;  
And as he swung the blade spilt fire. The clods  
Were glossy as they stumbled off and settled 20  
To wait until the tight weather should break them.

Each time he neared I hailed him, but the wind  
Or whirlpool of black wings weaving round him  
Broke up my words. Waiting his return  
I did not guess how he would one day rise  
Heroic into my imagination,  
Treading the land his fathers knew, plying

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Forward, back, a living shuttle, drawing  
Closer the invisible stuff of tradition.

But so I see him now, against wide morning,  
He and his plough, a moving statuary  
Of toil, an image of the will of our race,  
Familiar since man had no other annals  
Than those written on a scroll of land.

STANLEY SNAITH

## ORCHARDS

SOMETIMES in apple country you may see  
A ghostly orchard standing all in white,  
Aisles of white trees, white branches, in the green, 10  
On some still day when the year hangs between  
Winter and spring, and heaven is full of light.  
And rising from the ground pale clouds of smoke  
Float through the trees and hang upon the air,  
Trailing their wisps of blue like a swelled cloak  
From the round cheeks of breezes. But though fair  
To him who leans upon the gate to stare  
And muse "How delicate in spring they be,  
That mobled blossom and that wimpled tree,"  
There is a purpose in the cloudy aisles 20  
That took no thought of beauty for its care.  
For here's the beauty of all country miles,  
Their rolling pattern and their space :  
That there's a reason for each changing square,  
Here sleeping fallow, there a meadow mown,  
All to their use ranged different each year,  
The shaven grass, the gold, the brindled roan,  
Not in some search for empty grace,  
But fine through service and intent sincere.

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST



## NIGHT RHAPSODY

### NIGHT RHAPSODY

How beautiful it is to wake at night,  
When over all there reigns the ultimate spell  
Of complete silence, darkness absolute,  
To feel the world, tilted on axle-tree,  
In slow gyration, with no sensible sound,  
Unless to ears of unimagined beings,  
Resident incorporeal or stretched  
In vigilance of ecstasy among  
Ethereal paths and the celestial maze,  
The rumour of our onward course now brings        10  
A steady rustle, as of some strange ship  
Darkling with soundless sail all set and amply filled  
By volume of an ever-constant air,  
At fullest night, through seas for ever calm,  
Swept lovely and unknown for ever on.

How beautiful it is to wake at night,  
Embalmed in darkness watchful, sweet, and still,  
As is the brain's mood flattered by the swim  
Of currents circumvolvent in the void,  
To lie quite still and to become aware        20  
Of the dim light cast by nocturnal skies  
On a dim earth beyond the window-ledge,  
To brood apart in calm and joy awhile  
Until the spirit sinks and scarcely knows  
Whether self is, or if self only is,  
For ever. . . .

How beautiful to wake at night,  
Within the room grown strange, and still, and sweet,  
And live a century while in the dark  
The dripping wheel of silence slowly turns,        30  
To watch the window open on the night,  
A dewy silent deep where nothing stirs,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And, lying thus, to feel dilate within  
The press, the conflict, and the heavy pulse  
Of incommunicable sad ecstasy,  
Growing until the body seems outstretched  
In perfect crucifixion on the arms  
Of a cross pointing from last void to void,  
While the heart dies to a mere midway spark.

All happiness thou holdest, happy night,  
For such as lie awake and feel dissolved  
The peaceful spice of darkness and the cool 10  
Breath hither blown from the ethereal flowers  
That mist thy fields ! O happy, happy wounds,  
Conditioned by existence in humanity,  
That have such powers to heal them !—slow sweet sighs  
Torn from the bosom, silent wails, the birth  
Of such long-treasured tears as pain his eyes,  
Who, waking, hears the divine solitudes  
Of midnight with ineffable purport charged.

How beautiful it is to wake at night,  
Another night, in darkness yet more still, 20  
Save when the myriad leaves on full-fledged boughs,  
Filled rather by the perfumes' wandering flood  
Than by dispersion of the still sweet air,  
Shall from the furthest utter silences  
In glimmering secrecy have gathered up  
An host of whisperings and scattered sighs,  
To loose at last a sound as of the plunge  
And lapsing seethe of some Pacific wave,  
Which, risen from the star-thronged outer troughs,  
Rolls in to wreath with circling foam away 30  
The flutter of the golden moths that haunt  
The star's one glimmer daggered on wet sands.

So beautiful it is to wake at night !  
Imagination, loudening with the surf

## DUST

Of the midsummer wind among the boughs,  
Gathers my spirit from the haunts remote  
Of faintest silence and the shades of sleep,  
To bear me on the summit of her wave  
Beyond known shores, beyond the mortal edge  
Of thought terrestrial, to hold me poised  
Above the frontiers of infinity,  
To which in the full reflux of the wave  
Come soon I must, bubble of solving foam,  
Borne to those other shores—now never mine 10  
Save for a hovering instant, short as this  
Which now sustains me ere I be drawn back—  
To learn again, and wholly learn, I trust,  
How beautiful it is to wake at night.

ROBERT NICHOLS

## DUST

THE sower trudged and swung, leaning  
On the sinewy wind, and as he tossed,  
The grain over the chapped furrows  
Puffed from his hand like dust.

Dragged and driven, the upland trees  
Went in a confusion of leaf ; 20  
Even the pedantic oaks  
Bowed to that shadowy mischief.

Last autumn's skeletons ran, or lifted  
Like a flirt of sparrows off the ground.  
I dizzied at that tangled flight  
And the woodland's surf-sound.

O Conqueror, stand awhile in the hills  
Before scattering my life, I said,  
With the dead leaves and the quick dust  
And the thoughts out of my head. 30

STANLEY SNAITH

WOOD AND HILL

NOWHERE is one alone  
And in the closest covert least,  
But to small eye of bird or beast  
He will be known ;  
To-day it was for me  
A squirrel that embraced a tree  
Turning a small head round ;  
A hare too that ran up the hill,  
To his short forelegs level ground,  
And with tall ears stood still. 10  
But it was birds I could not see  
And larks that tried to stand on air  
That made of wood and hill a market-square.  
ANDREW YOUNG

THE SNOWDROP

Now—now, as low I stooped, thought I,  
I will see what this snowdrop is ;  
So shall I put much argument by,  
And solve a lifetime's mysteries.

A northern wind had frozen the grass ;  
Its blades were hoar with crystal rime,  
Aglint like light-dissecting glass 20  
At beam of morning prime.

From hidden bulb the flower reared up  
Its angled, slender, cold, dark stem,  
Whence dangled an inverted cup  
For tri-leaved diadem.

## THE GUEST

Beneath these ice-pure sepals lay  
A triplet of green-pencilled snow,  
Which in the chill-aired gloom of day  
    Stirred softly to and fro.

Mind fixed, but else made vacant, I,  
Lost to my body, called my soul  
To don that frail solemnity,  
    Its inmost self my goal.

And though in vain—no mortal mind  
Across that threshold yet hath fared !—      10  
In this collusion I divined  
    Some consciousness we shared.

Strange roads—while suns, a myriad, set—  
Had led us through infinity ;  
And where they crossed, there then had met  
    Not two of us, but three.

WALTER DE LA MARE

## THE GUEST

It seemed our guest was late or lost—  
Although the oakshoot thrust  
Through the stale snow its leafy crucifix  
The winter's spell to break.      20  
The pulse of water was hushed, the stems and sticks  
Were rasped with frost  
And bracken hunchbacked with snow's weight.  
No flower-knot burst on the stiff sedge.  
It seemed our guest was lost or late,  
Till watching how  
That goldfinch battled to a bough,  
A muscular twig trailed from its beak,  
I knew that Spring was faithful to her pledge.

STANLEY SNAITH

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

## A HOLLOW ELM

WHAT hast thou not withstood ;  
 Tempest-despising tree,  
 Whose bloat and riven wood  
 Gapes now so hollowly,  
 What rains have beaten thee through many years,  
 What snows from off thy boughs have dripped like tears?

Calmly thou standest now  
 Upon thy sunny mound ;  
 The first spring breezes flow  
 Past with sweet dizzy sound ;  
 Yet on thy pollard top the branches few  
 Stand stiffly out, disdain to murmur too.

The children at thy foot  
Open new-lighted eyes  
Where on gnarled bark and root  
The soft, warm sunshine lies—  
Dost thou upon thine ancient sides resent  
The touch of youth, quick and impermanent?

These at the beck of spring  
Live in the moment still ;  
Thy boughs unquivering,  
Remembering winter's chill  
And many other winters past and gone,  
Are mocked, not cheated, by the transient sun.

Hast thou so much withstood,  
Dumb and unmoving tree,  
That now thy hollow wood  
Stiffens disdainfully  
Against the soft spring airs and soft spring rain,  
Knowing too well that winter comes again? 30

EDWARD SHANKS



## INVITATION TO CAST OUT CARE

### A SWITCH CUT IN APRIL

THIS thin elastic stick was plucked  
From gradual growing in a hedge,  
Where early mist awakened leaf,  
And late damp hands with spiral stroke  
Smoothed slumber from the weighted day,  
While flowers drooped with colours furled.

I cut quick circles with the stick :  
It whistles in the April air  
An eager song, a bugle call,  
A signal for the running feet, 10  
For rising flyer flashing sun,  
And windy tree with surging crest.

This pliant wood like expert whip  
Snaps action in its voice, commands  
A quiver from the sloth, achieves  
A jerk in buds ; with stinging lash  
A spring of movement in the stiff  
And sleeping limbs of winter land.

Stick plucked and peeled, companions lost,  
Torn from its rooted stock : I hold 20  
Elate and lithe within my hand  
Winged answer to the wings' impulse,  
The calyx breaking into flame,  
The crystal cast into the light.

CLIFFORD DYMENT

## INVITATION TO CAST OUT CARE

COME, stoop between the hazel leaves,  
And thrust the chestnut branch aside ;  
The tangle that the woodland weaves  
Forgets the waiting world outside ;

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

So in this cave of watered green  
Cool all thy thoughts by care opprest,  
And let the sunlight fall between  
The leaves, and dapple on thy breast.

The green of spring, the youngest green,  
That chequers all the leafy ride,  
Shall mesh the lattice of the screen  
Where fact and myth for thee divide ;  
The bluebells drifting through the trees,  
A silent brook along the brook, 10  
Shall flow for thee as fantasies  
Escaped from reason's record-book.

The hyacinths between the trees'  
Young green shall spread as blue as smoke,  
Wider than dreams or prophecies  
Around the static, rooted oak ;  
The little owl that cries by night  
Shall voice thine intimate despair,  
And barking foxes shall invite  
Thy sorrow to the listening air ; 20

Wild influences that invoke  
Communion with a mind perplexed,  
And all the secrecies uncloak  
That crouch within a spirit vexed,  
And seek no ease in spoken words,  
But in the chapel of the wood  
Take wing among the boughs with birds  
To find a perfect brotherhood.

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST

## HIGH NOON

FROM high endeavour  
On his bright wings, 30  
The wasp is fallen  
To sorry things.

## PRAYER FOR RAIN

From deep searching  
In honey'd cup  
The bee is flown  
Elsewhere to sup.

An apple dropped  
By a grey trunk—  
A wasp wastrel,  
And a bee drunk !

HAMISH MACLAREN

## TORMENTED BY THE WORLD

TORMENTED by the world, the wise man said :  
A rock stands in the sea, 10  
And white the anger of water ceaselessly  
Thunders upon that stubborn head.  
And I heard the noise of the water say  
“ Not now, not now, but soon enough, ay, soon  
Thou shalt be worn away.”  
And I perceived the soul within the stone,  
And that it answered the corroding tide :  
“ Do all thou canst : have me in thy power :  
Destroy this body while it is thy hour.  
Shall I be injured, I undignified, 20  
Who am my soul, and in my soul  
Am God.”—Whereat the whole  
Insult of the storming sea  
In one confounding cataract replied,  
“ What else, thou fool, thinkest thou I may be ? ”

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

## PRAYER FOR RAIN

O GOD, make it rain !  
Loose the soft silver passion of the rain !

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Send swiftly from above  
This clear token of Thy love.  
Make it rain !

Deck the bushes and the trees  
With the tassels of the rain.  
Make the brooks pound to the seas  
And the earth shine young again.  
God of passion, send the rain !

Oh, restore our ancient worth  
With Thy rain !  
Ease the heartache of the earth ;  
Sap the grain.  
Fill the valleys and the dales  
With Thy silver slanting gales ;  
And through England and wild Wales  
Send the rain !

10

Lord, restore us to Thy will  
With the rain !  
Soak the valley, drench the hill,  
Drown the stain ;  
Smite the mountain's withered hips,  
Wash the rouge from sunset's lips,  
Fill the sky with singing ships.  
Send the rain !

20

HERBERT PALMER

## THE LANE

SOME day, I think, there will be people enough  
In Froxfield to pick all the blackberries  
Out of the hedges of Green Lane, the straight  
Broad lane where now September hides herself  
In bracken and blackberry, harebell and dwarf gorse.

## MORTALITY

To-day, where yesterday a hundred sheep  
Were nibbling, halcyon bells shake to the sway  
Of waters that no vessel ever sailed. . . .

It is a kind of spring : the chaffinch tries  
His song. For heat it is like summer too.  
This might be winter's quiet. While the glint  
Of hollies dark in the swollen hedges lasts—  
One mile—and those bells ring, little I know  
Or heed if time be still the same, until  
The land ends and once more all is the same. 10

EDWARD THOMAS

## MORTALITY

As I went down the field that day  
Where late was stooked my silver hay,  
It seemed a day of death ;  
My spaniel nosing on the ground  
Set up a rabbit whose lithe bound  
Was checked with choking breath.

In loam was then withheld my foot ;  
I looked to see some saucy root,  
But lo ! it was a mole,  
His naked feet upraised in air,  
No sign of murderer anywhere,  
Nor yet of burrow-hole. 20

Death was not done with me that day  
Where late had stood my silver hay,  
For, last, I found a bird ;  
And, oh, though its quick voice was still,  
Loud, loud upon that stricken hill,  
" Mortality," I heard.

JOHN GAWSWORTH

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### A WINDY DAY

THIS wind brings all dead things to life,  
Branches that lash the air like whips  
And dead leaves rolling in a hurry  
Or peering in a rabbits' bury  
Or trying to push down a tree ;  
Gates that fly open to the wind  
And close again behind,  
And fields that are a flowing sea  
And make the cattle look like ships ;  
Straws glistening and stiff  
Lying on air as on a shelf  
And pond that leaps to leave itself ;  
And feathers too that rise and float,  
Each feather changed into a bird,  
And line-hung sheets that crack and strain ;  
Even the sun-greened coat,  
That through so many winds has served,  
The scarecrow struggles to put on again.

10

ANDREW YOUNG

### THE SOWER

“ O WHO is this at sunrise sowing,  
Young as the springtime and as fair ?  
On rosy mantle blithely blowing  
Swerves so exultantly down the air  
Scarce seems it dull earth is imprinted ?  
Who upon gilded sandal going  
Scatters with grace his gay unstinted  
Golden bounty everywhere ? ”

20

“ The seed I sow is living treasure,  
Dowered with profound and obscure might  
Of earth to bear unearthly pleasure,



## DARK-SKIED NOVEMBER

Of deepest dark to gather light ;  
But first by frost must it be chidden,  
By strong rain ravaged beyond measure,  
Until its fiery flower, long hidden,  
Flame forth to fill a happy night."

" Lovely sower so lightly strowing  
Your golden bounty everywhere,  
The breeze has borne you beyond knowing  
Nor mind I what spring frosts there were.  
The summer rains long since have risen, 10  
The autumn rains now cease their blowing,  
The seed lies in its secret prison  
And deathly still the winter air."

ROBERT NICHOLS

## DARK-SKIED NOVEMBER, HOW HAST THOU NOW TURNED

DARK-SKIED November, how hast thou now turned  
To drear reflection all our glad employ !  
Chill visitor, who com'st but to destroy  
Our fruiting of contentment tardy earned,  
With thy sad look ; silent remembrancer,  
Who, hand on lip, with ruthless eye dost tell  
To hill and field and wood what know they well— 20  
How changèd shall they be from what they were.

Now, her vain joys repented of, each tree  
Drops first those leaves whereon the sun first shined ;  
Dulling thy steps, as by dank hedgerows twined  
With perished grace thou walk'st : now echoes thee  
Down the dim alleys of each mortal mind  
The muffled footfall of eternity.

ELIZABETH DARYUSH

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### WINTER FIELD

SORROW on the acres,  
Wind in the thorn,  
And an old man ploughing  
Through the frosty morn.

A flock of the dark birds,  
Rooks and their wives,  
Follow the plough team  
The old man drives ;

And troops of starlings,  
A-tittle-tat and prim,  
Follow the rooks  
That follow him.

10

A. E. COPPARD

### SNOW

THE room was suddenly rich and the great bay-  
window was

Spawning snow and pink roses against it  
Soundlessly collateral and incompatible :  
World is suddener than we fancy it.

World is crazier and more of it than we think,  
Incorrigibly plural. I peel and portion  
A tangerine and spit the pips and feel  
The drunkenness of things being various.

20

And the fire flames with a bubbling sound for world  
Is more spiteful and gay than one supposes—  
On the tongue on the eyes on the ears in the palms of  
one's hands—  
There is more than glass between the snow and the  
huge roses.

LOUIS MACNEICE

## THE WAYFARER

### ODE

O to us speak  
Bleak snow  
With your mellifluous smooth tongue :  
  
What have we done wrong  
What wrong have we done,  
Our strongest perish without an answering blow  
Our strongest young  
Hour by hour grow weaker,  
While we like prisoners look on  
Awaiting our warmth and storage, our ally, the Sun.

Return from the west 11  
Our hour is come,  
Release the squirrel from its frozen nest  
The worm from solid mould,  
Cremate to comfortable dust  
Our old, and immediately reduce  
The icy fortifications of our adversary ;  
Dissolve with lightning the imprisoning cold :

Arm with miraculous beams our youth  
Clothed in the habiliments of your warmth, 20  
And resuscitate all fiery spirits from their death.

GEORGE BARKER

## THE WAYFARER

A LAMP shines in a single window,  
And the wayfarer pauses, looks ahead.

The fields not mute now, though the sensitive fabric  
Of a man's ear must be taut and tuned  
To register the rub of a vole's red body  
Against a bush ; the crack of the mouse's skull

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

In an owl's beak ; the badger's and the rabbit's way ;  
The wind winding among the stems of flowers,  
And a leaf falling on the grass.

The fields not mute, though the sounds are small,  
And in nocturnal quiet lost.

The huge wood whispering,  
The invisible hills somewhere to the south,  
And the city far away  
Are covered by the wide hand of the sky,  
The hand that is freckled with stars. 10

The wayfarer, standing in the enormous meadow,  
Sees the yellow square of the lamp,  
And knows the fox is not his brother,  
Nor the drifting owl his guide ;  
Knows the stone no pillow, nor soil his bread,  
Nor the milk of petals his wine.

Looking ahead, the wayfarer knows this,  
And is aware that he must kneel  
To know the creatures whom he loves,  
For the wayfarer is solitary in his country. 20

CLIFFORD DYMENT

## THE SECRET WOOD

WHERE there is nothing more to see  
Than this old earth-bound tree  
That years ago dry sawdust bled  
But sprouts each spring a leaf or two  
As though it tried not to be dead,  
Or that down-hanging broken bough  
That keeps its withered leaves till now  
Like a dead man that cannot move  
Or take his own clothes off,

## MOUNTAINS

What is it that I seek or who,  
Fearing from passer-by  
Intrusion of a foot or eye ?  
I only know  
Though all men of earth's beauty speak  
Beauty here I do not seek  
More than I sought it on my mother's cheek.  
ANDREW YOUNG

## IN THE HILLS

THE athletic road swings round  
And takes the abrupt fellside at a bound ;  
But I am well content to turn my back 10  
And spin my spider track  
In the mountain dew, that stonechat will not dread,  
Nor fox and hare, to tread.  
STANLEY SNAITH

## MOUNTAINS

WITH dignity ye surge into the sky,  
O mountain fortresses : pure is the gleam  
Of the far worlds caught in your naked slabs :  
Well tempered are ye in the season's forge,  
Cold progeny of the fire-breathing sun.  
Ye heed not the soft mists and wooing clouds  
That your locked hollows gently seek to explore. 20  
Proudly above the clinging claim of life  
Ye rise to break the elemental storms :  
Proudly ye sluice the drooping vines below,  
Gaunt monuments of fire that lost its soul.  
MICHAEL MCKENNA

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### GARNETT'S GARDEN

I LOOK down from my window,  
And I see  
A ramble of forget-me-not  
Beneath a flowery tree ;  
As if the sky had fallen  
To let pass  
A lovely girl  
To dance upon the grass.  
I could lie happy dead beneath your garden  
If my soul could walk the skies 10  
With such white lovely women,  
In a cool paradise.

ANNA WICKHAM

### TO A GIRL AT THE SEELEY LIBRARY

WHEN with crouched shoulders and attentive head  
You droop, lovely, above a sullen page,  
So ill your eyes expend their wealth of power  
Beauty might mourn her wasted heritage :  
Yet all the careful wisdom you have read  
Lies like the dust upon a thirsty flower.

For I have heard you in clear reveries  
Laughing across the Downs, and we have swung 20  
Down Pen-y-Pas together and lain still  
On Cleadon when the lark below us sung,  
And sunlight rippled to your eager eyes,  
And winds went tumbling down the sleepy hill.

EDWARD DAVISON



## PUDDLES

### OXFORD REVISITED

ALAS ! what make you here poor ghost that goes  
Where your swift feet of youth so lightly went ?  
Time has borne down that gracious argument  
Which was your advocate where Isis flows  
Through Christ Church meadows. Sublimate your  
woes

Among these happy children whose consent  
Holds out kind hands ; accept the treasure lent,  
Unconquered sweetness, death-defying rose.

Would yet this sweetness find an echoed home  
Where the dream-built city's semblance lies 10  
Beyond the stars, could but its silver bell  
Out-chime the iron knell of miscalled doom,  
How would not Death come kindly with mild eyes  
Shining like invocated Uriel ?

ALFRED DOUGLAS

## PUDDLES

THE casual children of the storm, they play  
like ragged urchins in the public road.  
Even the Earth, their mother, holds them cheap :  
she feeds them not—for them no welling fount  
of waters from her bosom flows ; they wait 20  
on the chance mercies of the passing showers.  
Nor are they clothed as are their foster-brothers  
of field and meadow, in fine cloth of grass  
green-woven with gay broideries of flowers,  
but in coarse tatters from the gutters picked  
and muddy fents. They have no playfellows  
save the drab tousled sparrows ; and no toys,  
no wind-blown petal, fallen leaf, but make

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

what sport they can with twigs and random straws  
and matches by the careless passer dropped.  
None gives them heed, and they must live their days  
neglected and despised, to come at last  
to shrunken grey decrepitude and die,  
sunk in a nameless grave as paupers are.  
None gives them heed, poor urchins ! Yet have I  
many a time been cheered upon my way  
seeing how bravely they have made the best  
of their lean chance : no merrier laugh than that 10  
which on their dirty faces greets the wind  
was ever in ripples flashed ; no friendlier smile  
by any pool is given than when the sun  
shines from their eyes. Then is their poor attire  
forgotten and their lowly circumstance,  
and I remember only  
youth's irrepressible joy, the loveliness  
inseparable from waters great and small,  
whose power and gift from God is to reflect  
the lights of heaven ; and as I go my way, 20  
often in sudden deep humility,  
often in gratitude, I pause to bless  
the cheerful puddles of the public road.

J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

## IN THE SPRING, AND IN SEPTEMBER

IN the dreary morning, when  
Every wave is capped with foam,  
Seafarers remember then  
Pansies in the garden loam.

When beneath the silver Plough  
Blow the clouds, half-hiding it,  
Seafarers remember how  
Lamps in village inns are lit. 30

## THE BOYNE WALK

In the spring, and in September,  
When the white-throat swallows pass,  
Mariners, looking up, remember  
The sweet waves of upland grass.

HAMISH MACLAREN

## THE BOYNE WALK

"FROM these dew-lapped fields," said the Meath  
man,

"Tramps doze at their drink and the shiny air  
Is too drunk to stir," or so his words ran  
As we walked, half-hidden, through where the reeds  
stand

Between the Boyne and its green canal ;  
And sweltering I kept to the pace he planned, 10  
Yet he wouldn't even wait in the reeds  
To watch a red perch, like a Japanese hand,  
Grope in the sun-shot water and weeds—  
He merely called back : " O, go be damned ! "

With break-neck looks at the strealy end  
Of a stupefied town, I paced his heel  
By moat, dead wall and under an arch  
That was all of a crouch with the weight of years ;  
But where the road led I'd have known were I  
wise

From one running look in the dark of his eyes— 20  
For each seemed the bright astrological plan  
Of a new Don Quixote and his man  
Again on campaign with ladder-ribbed steeds  
Knock-kneed—what odds ! One cock of the ears  
Or an opening smoke-blue eye in the reeds  
Would fork me upon a bare back, and, cheers !  
We'd have ridden our road as the kings of Meath.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

We walked, as became two kings outcast  
From plains walled in by a grass-raising lord,  
Whose saint is the Joker, whose hope is the Past—  
What victuals for bards could that lad afford ?  
O, none ! So off went his dust from our boots,  
But his dust that day was of buttercup gold  
From a slope, with a sight that was, man alive,  
grand :

Just two servant girls spreading blue clothes  
On grass too deep for a crow to land ; 9  
And though they waved to us we kept on our track,  
And though to the bank their own clothes soon toppled  
We sweltered along—while my thought floated back  
Through shy beauty's bathing-pool, like an old bottle !

Heat trembled in halos on grass and on cattle  
And each rock blazed like a drunken face ;  
So I cried to the man of the speedy wattle  
“ In the name of Lot's wife will you wait a space  
For Adam's red apple hops dry in my throttle,”  
And yet instead of easing the pace,  
I saw on the broad blackboard of his back 20  
His muscles made signs of a far greater chase,  
Until as I tried to keep up on his track  
Each pore of my skin became a hot spring  
And every bone swam in a blister of pains  
While all my bent body seemed as an old crane's  
Lost in a great overcoat of wings.  
Soon out from my sight off went the big Meath  
man

Dodging the reeds of his nine-mile road,  
So I lolled, as a bard bereft of his daemon  
Or a Moses awaiting a light-burdened cloud ; 30  
But heaven lay low all naked and brazen  
Within the mad calm on that desert of green,  
Where nothing, not even the water, is lean,  
Where the orderly touches of Thought aren't seen—

## THE BOYNE WALK

And yet not a wild thought sang in my noddle ;  
Ah, how could it sing, while speed bit each heel,  
While heat tugged a tight noose into my throttle  
And while, on my spine, the hung head went nodding  
As on it fierce light picked with a black bill.

Then where in soft Meath can one find ease ?  
When the sun, like a scarecrow, stands in those  
meadows

Guarding their glory, not even the breeze  
That ghostly rogue, can crop a shadow ;  
When even I asked for " a drink, if you please " 10  
A woman, as proud as a motherly sow,  
Hoked out of my way and hid where a larch  
Leant like a derrick across an old barge  
Stocked in the reeds ; and so I went parched !  
Ah, but soon down the Boyne, there O the surprise  
From a leaping fish—that silver flicker—  
Was nothing compared to what hit my eyes :  
An innocent house, marked " Licensed for Liquor ! "

Could anyone treat me to brighter green meadows  
Than the Meath man who finished his thirsty plan  
when 20

Between every swig he mooned through those windows?  
And yet, on my oath, it was easier then  
To coop a mountainy cloud in a henhouse  
Than to group the Meath light into lines for my  
pen ;

And still I must bless him since beauty was caught  
In ears that were drumming, in eyes all sweat,  
In nostrils slimmed by indrawn breath ;  
For I made, as we lay in the grass by that road  
This poem—a gem from the head of a toad ;  
So here, will you take it—hall-marked by a day 30  
Over the hills and far away ?

F. R. HIGGINS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### THE FLOWERING REED

WHEN the red brands of day consume  
And in the darkening Rhone illumine  
The still reflections of the reed,  
I saw its passing leagues of gloom,  
Torrential in their strength and speed,  
Resisted by a rosy plume  
That burned far down among the weed ;  
As in the dark of Tullia's tomb  
The final wick-tethered phantom set  
To watch, remember and regret, 10  
Thawing faint tears to feed its fume  
Of incense, spent in one long sigh  
The centuries that thundered by  
To battle, scooping huge moraines  
Across the wreck of fifty reigns ;  
It held a candle to the eye  
To show how much must pass and die  
To set such scatheless phantoms free,  
Or feather with one reed of rhyme  
The boulder-rolling Rhone of time, 20  
That rafts our ruin to the sea.

ROY CAMPBELL

### MIDDLE OF THE WORLD

THIS sea will never die, neither will it ever grow old  
nor cease to be blue, nor in the dawn  
cease to lift up its hills  
and let the slim black ship of Dionysos come sailing in  
with grape-vines up the mast, and dolphins leaping.

What do I care if the smoking ships  
of the P. and O. and the Orient Line and all the other  
stinkers



## THE OLIVE TREE

cross like clock-work the Minoan distance !  
They only cross, the distance never changes.

And now that the moon who gives men glistening  
bodies  
is in her exaltation, and can look down on the sun  
I see descending from the ships at dawn  
slim naked men from Cnossos, smiling the archaic smile  
of those that will without fail come back again,  
and kindling little fires upon the shores  
and crouching, and speaking the music of lost  
languages.

And the Minoan Gods, and the Gods of Tiryns 10  
are heard softly laughing and chatting, as ever ;  
and Dionysos, young, and a stranger  
leans listening on the gate, in all respect.

D. H. LAWRENCE

## THE OLIVE TREE

IN a bare country shorn of leaf,  
By no remote sierra screened,  
Where pauses in the wind are brief  
As the remorse of a fiend,  
The stark Laocoon this tree  
Forms of its knotted arm and thigh  
In snaky tussle with a sky 20  
Whose hatred is eternity,  
Through his white fronds that whirl and seethe  
And in the groaning root he screws,  
Makes heard the cry of all who breathe,  
Repulsing and accusing still  
The Enemy who shaped his thews  
And is inherent to his will.

ROY CAMPBELL

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### VESPERS ON THE NILE

WHEN to their roost the sacred ibis file,  
Mosquito-thin against the fading West,  
And palm-trees fishing in the crimson Nile  
Dangle their windless effigies of rest,

Scarce to the moon's hushed conquest of the blue  
Have waked the wingless warblers of the bogs,  
Or to the lunar sabbath staunchly true  
The jackals sung their first selenologues,

When through the waste, far-flung as from a steeple  
First in low rumours, then in sounding choir,      10  
The lamentation of an ancient people  
Sounds from the waters and the sands of fire ;

And centuries have heard that plaint persist,  
Since Pharaoh's foreman stood with lifted quirt,  
Or swung the bloody sjambok in his fist  
To cut the sluggard through his hairy shirt.

This was the strain, the Amphionic lyre,  
By which were carted Thebes' colossal stones,  
Which though it lifted pyramid and spire  
Yet rang their ruin in prophetic tones.      20

Still theirs the agony, still theirs the bondage,  
Still theirs the toil, their recompense forlorn  
To crop the thistles, bite the withered frondage  
And rasp the bitter stubble of the corn.

Still as if Pharaoh's sjambok cut their rumps,  
Sick for some Zion of the vast inane,

## AT RHEY [RHAGES]

The effort of a thousand rusty pumps  
Wheezes untiring through their shrill refrain.

Where royal suns descending left no stains,  
Where forms of power and beauty change and pass,  
One epic to eternity remains—  
The heehawhallelujahs of the Ass.

ROY CAMPBELL

## AT RHEY [RHAGES]

WHAT says the Persian poet? "In travel meet  
together

The native of Merv and of Rhey, the Roman and the  
Kurd."

Now at Rhey, in the Persian summer weather,  
I saw on the rocks a swallow, an English bird. 10

I wondered, had it nested under a rafter  
There in Kent, built a nest of Kentish clay?  
Brought up its young to the sound of English laughter,  
And heard the English laughter again at Rhey?

The rocks were red in the sun, the rocks were  
bare ;

Ruin was on the hillside, shards were found

On the rocky hillside there

Beneath a little scraping of the ground.

Shards of Darius' and Alexander's day

Where the swallow skimmed the mound 20

As if Alexander had not passed that way,

But only the months gone by in journeying

From the meadows to the red rocks in the plain,

From the red rocks to the meadows back again,

On the impulse of a blind instinctive wing,

As if Raphael and Tobias had never come to Rhey.

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### TRISTAN DA CUNHA

SNORE in the foam ; the night is vast and blind ;  
The blanket of the mist about your shoulders,  
Sleep your old sleep of rock, snore in the wind,  
Snore in the spray ! the storm your slumber lulls,  
His wings are folded on your nest of boulders  
As on their eggs the grey wings of your gulls.

No more as when, so dark an age ago,  
You hissed a giant cinder from the ocean,  
Around your rocks you furl the shawling snow  
Half sunk in your own darkness, vast and grim, 10  
And round you on the deep with surly motion  
Pivot your league-long shadow as you swim.

Why should you haunt me thus but that I know  
My surly heart is in your own displayed,  
Round whom such leagues in endless circuit flow,  
Whose hours in such a gloomy compass run—  
A dial with its league-long arm of shade  
Slowly revolving to the moon and sun.

My pride has sunk, like your grey fissured crags,  
By its own strength o'ertopped and betrayed : 20  
I, too, have burned the wind with fiery flags  
Who now am but a roost for empty words,  
An island of the sea whose only trade  
Is in the voyages of its wandering birds.

Did you not, when your strength became your pyre,  
Deposed and tumbled from your flaming tower,  
Awake in gloom from whence you sank in fire,  
To find, Antaeus-like, more vastly grown,  
A throne in your own darkness, and a power  
Sheathed in the very coldness of your stone ? 30

## TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Your strength is that you have no hope or fear,  
You march before the world without a crown,  
The nations call you back, you do not hear,  
The cities of the earth grow grey behind you,  
You will be there when their great flames go down  
And still the morning in the van will find you.

You march before the continents, you scout  
In front of all the earth ; alone you scale  
The mast-head of the world, a lorn look-out,  
Waving the snowy flutter of your spray 1c  
And gazing back in infinite farewell  
To suns that sink and shores that fade away.

From your grey tower what long regrets you fling  
To where, along the low horizon burning,  
The great swan-breasted seraphs soar and sing,  
And suns go down, and trailing splendours dwindle,  
And sails on lonely errands unreturning  
Glow with a gold no sunrise can rekindle.

Turn to the night ; these flames are not for you  
Whose steeple for the thunder swings its bells ; 2c  
Grey Memnon, to the tempest only true,  
Turn to the night, turn to the shadowing foam,  
And let your voice, the saddest of farewells,  
With sullen curfew toll the grey wings home.

The wind, your mournful syren, haunts the gloom :  
The rocks, spray-clouded, are your signal guns  
Whose stony nitre, puffed with flying spume,  
Rolls forth in grim salute your broadside hollow  
Over the gorgeous burials of suns  
To sound the tocsin of the storms that follow. 3c

Plunge forward like a ship to battle hurled,  
Slip the long cables of the failing light,  
The level rays that moor you to the world :

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Sheathed in your armour of eternal frost,  
Plunge forward, in the thunder of the fight  
To lose yourself as I would fain be lost.

Exiled like you and severed from my race  
By the cold ocean of my own disdain,  
Do I not freeze in such a wintry space,  
Do I not travel through a storm as vast  
And rise at times, victorious from the main,  
To fly the sunrise at my shattered mast?

Your path is but a desert where you reap 10  
Only the bitter knowledge of your soul :  
You fish with nets of seaweed in the deep  
As fruitlessly as I with nets of rhyme—  
Yet forth you stride, yourself the way, the goal,  
The surges are your strides, your path is time.

Hurled by what aim to what tremendous range !  
A missile from the great sling of the past,  
Your passage leaves its track of death and change  
And ruin on the world : you fly beyond,  
Leaping the current of the ages vast 20  
As lightly as a pebble skims a pond.

The years are undulations in your flight  
Whose awful motion we can only guess—  
Too swift for sense, too terrible for sight,  
We only know how fast behind you darken  
Our days like lonely beacons of distress :  
We know that you stride on and will not hearken.

Now in the eastern sky the fairest planet  
Pierces the dying wave with dangled spear,  
And in the whirring hollows of your granite 30  
That vaster sea to which you are a shell  
Sighs with a ghostly rumour, like the drear  
Moan of the nightwind in a hollow cell.



## THE WANDERER

We shall not meet again ; over the wave  
Our ways divide, and yours is straight and endless,  
But mine is short and crooked to the grave :  
Yet what of these dark crowds amid whose flow  
I battle like a rock, aloof and friendless,  
Are not their generations vague and endless  
The waves, the strides, the feet on which I go ?

ROY CAMPBELL

## THE WANDERER

You swept across the waters like a Queen,  
Finding a path where never trackway showed,  
Daylong you coultured the ungarnered clean 10  
Casting your travelling shadow as you strode.

And in the night, when lamps were lit, you sped  
With gleams running beside you, like to hounds,  
Swift, swift, a dappled glitter of light shed  
On snatching sprays above collapsing mounds.

And after many a calm and many a storm,  
Nearing your land, your sailors saw arise  
The pinnacles of snow where streamers form,  
And the ever-dying surf that never dies.

Then, laden with Earth's spoils, you used to come 20  
Back, from the ocean's beauty to the roar  
Of all the hammers of the mills of home,  
Your wandering sailors dragged you to the shore,

Singing, to leave you muted and inert,  
A moping place for sea-gulls in the rain  
While city strangers trod you with their dirt,  
And landsmen loaded you for sea again.

JOHN MASEFIELD

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### SAILOR AND INLAND FLOWER

THE stars never had any mystery for me :  
In the soft midnight, in the Indian Sea,  
I had simply to level my sextant at Arcturus's eye  
And he had to tell me where I was ; he dared not lie.

I had simply to level my sextant and wonder, " To-  
night

Where am I, Arcturus, Arcturus bright ? "   
And he would twirl his silver whiskers and then say :  
" You are exactly seventeen hours' steaming from  
Bombay."

Orion, the Lion, the Crab, and Betelgeuse,  
They were all as friendly as farm-hands in the *Fox*  
*and Geese.* 10

But these unwinking wood anemones  
That make a Milky Way beneath the trees  
Are nothing but secrecies.

They simply shine there, and keep  
Themselves in eternal haughtiness and half-sleep,  
And I might be in Atlantis, or any haunted place  
Out of time and space.

HAMISH MACLAREN

### SAILING SHIPS

LYING on Downs above the wrinkling bay  
I with the kestrels shared the cleanly day,  
The candid day ; wind-shaven, brindled turf ; 20  
Tall cliffs ; and long sea-line of marbled surf  
From Cornish Lizard to the Kentish Nore  
Lipping the bulwarks of the English shore,

## SAILING SHIPS

While many a lovely ship below sailed by  
On unknown errand, kempt and leisurely ;  
And after each, oh, after each, my heart  
Fled forth, as, watching from the Downs apart,  
I shared with ships good joys and fortunes wide  
That might befall their beauty and their pride ;

Shared first with them the blessed void repose  
Of oily days at sea, when only rose  
The porpoise's slow wheel to break the sheen  
Of satin water indolently green ; 10  
When for'ard the crew, caps tilted over eyes,  
Lay heaped on deck ; slept ; murmured ; smoked ;  
threw dice ;  
The sleepy summer days ; the summer nights  
(The coast pricked out with rings of harbour-lights),  
The motionless nights, the vaulted nights of June  
When high in the cordage drifts the entangled  
moon,  
And blocks go knocking, and the sheets go slapping,  
And lazy swells against the sides come lapping ;  
And summer mornings off red Devon rocks,  
Faint inland bells at dawn and crowing cocks. 20

Shared swifter days, when headlands into ken  
Trode grandly ; threatened ; and were lost again,  
Old fangs along the battlemented coast ;  
And followed still my ship, when winds were most  
Night-purified, and, lying steeply over,  
She fled the wind as flees a girl her lover,  
Quickened by that pursuit for which she fretted,  
Her temper by the contest proved and whetted ;  
Wild stars swept overhead ; her lofty spars  
Reared to a ragged heaven sown with stars, 30  
As leaping out from narrow English ease  
She faced the roll of long Atlantic seas.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Her captain then was I, I was her crew,  
The mind that laid her course, the wake she drew,  
The waves that rose against her bows, the gales,—  
Nay, I was more ; I was her very sails  
Rounded before the wind, her eager keel,  
Her straining mast-heads, her responsive wheel,  
Her pennon stiffened like a swallow's wing ;  
Yes, I was all her slope and speed and swing,  
Whether by yellow lemons and blue sea  
She dawdled through the isles off Thessaly, 10  
Or saw the palms like sheaves of scimitars  
On desert's verge below the sunset bars,  
Or passed the girdle of the planet where  
The Southern Cross looks over to the Bear,  
And strayed, cool Northerner beneath strange skies,  
Flouting the lure of tropic estuaries,  
Down that long coast, and saw Magellan's Clouds  
arise.

And some that beat up Channel homeward-bound  
I watched, and wondered what they might have  
found,  
What alien ports enriched their teeming hold 20  
With crates of fruit or bars of unwrought gold ?  
And thought how London clerks with paper-clips  
Had filed the bills of lading of those ships,  
Clerks that had never seen the embattled sea,  
But wrote down jettison and barratry,  
Perils, Adventures, and the Act of God,  
Having no vision of such wrath flung broad ;  
Wrote down with weary and accustomed pen  
The classic dangers of sea-faring men ;  
And wrote " Restraint of Princes," and " the Acts 30  
Of the King's Enemies," as vacant facts,  
Blind to the ambushed seas, the encircling roar  
Of angry nations foaming into war.

VICTORIA SACKVILLE-WEST

## THE BLUE-PETER

### THE BLUE-PETER

THE day has come for sailing ; and at last  
The brisk blue-peter flutters at the mast.  
Too long beneath the mountains we have lain  
While winds and waters called to us in vain :  
Too long the inn has held us, and too long  
Our ears have hearkened to the tavern-song.  
The time has come to quit the company  
Of those who dread the isolating sea,  
Who, slumbering through night-watches, spend their  
days

Carousing in the ingle's drowsy blaze : 10  
For what are they to us who are the sons  
Of tempest, in whose veins the salt tide runs,  
Whose pulses answer to the ebb and flow  
Of all the seas that travel to and fro,  
Whose feet have trod the tilting deck from birth  
And stumble only on the stable earth,  
Whose eyes can pierce the spindrift of the night  
And blunder blindfold in the tavern light,  
Whose hearts must ever in the throng and press  
Ache with intolerable loneliness 20  
Shut in by walls as in an airless grave,  
Whose home is the unvalled unraftered wave,  
Who each within himself can only find  
In solitude the comrade to his mind,  
And only in the lone sea-watch can be  
At ease at length in his own company.

The brisk blue-peter beckons ; and at last  
Our souls shall ride full-sailed before the blast  
Into the perilous security  
Of strife with the uncompromising sea. 30  
WILFRID W. GIBSON

DOCKS

WHEN paint or steel or wood are wearing thin,  
 Then they come in :  
 The liners, schooners, merchantmen, and tramps,  
 Upon a head of water pressing hard  
 On gates of greenheart wood, that close and guard  
 The docks, till lintels, clamps,  
 Swing suddenly on quoins steel-pivoted,  
 With harsh complaint and clang,  
 And then above the walls arise and spread  
 Top-gallant yards or funnel, spanker-vang 10  
 Or dolphin-striker ; figure-heads arise  
 That settling sway  
 Beside an inn ; a mermaid's breasts and eyes  
 Beneath a bowsprit glare beside a dray.

All docks are wonderful, whether beside  
 The estuaries or foreshores robbed of sea,  
 Where jetties and much dredging keep them free,  
 And the strong constant scouring of the tide  
 Sweeps down the silt ; or where by sandy dune  
 The neap-tides leave them dry, or flood-tides dash 20  
 With a vindictive lash  
 At the conjunction of the sun and moon.  
 And wonderful are dry docks, where the ships  
 Are run on keel-props held by timber-shores,  
 And sterns and proes  
 Stand up for scrapers' work, and the paint drips  
 Among algae and mussels ; wonderful when  
 Docks still are in the building, and the pumps  
 Move water from the sumps,  
 And derricks, little trains, and shouting men 30  
 Dump clustered cylinders upon the gravel,  
 And through the sky square blocks of granite travel,  
 Dangling to place to make the sills. Or when





## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Courage, goodness, tenderness :  
Beauty, wisdom, ecstasy :  
Wonder, love, and loveliness :  
Hope, and immortality :  
What is pure,  
Or what is lovely ?  
Nothing is that will endure !

Pure and lovely sleep and wait,  
Where not good nor ill is done,  
In the keep, within the gate,  
At the heart of everyone :  
What is pure,  
Or what is lovely ?  
All is, and doth all endure.

10

JAMES STEPHENS

## ROTATION

EVEN the owls are lyrical  
When the moon's right,  
And we have no patience with the stars  
On a dusty night.

Love is dull with the mood wrong,  
And age may outsing youth,  
For there is no measuring a song,  
Nor counting upon truth.

20

All's well, and then a flood of loss  
Surges upon delight,  
While the rose buds upon the cross,  
And the blind have sight.

## THE IMMORTAL HOUR

Morning wisdom vanishes,  
And dusk brings dread  
That stalwart sleep banishes  
Ere primes are said.

He who is sure, has all to learn ;  
Who fears, but fears in vain ?  
For never a day does the year turn,  
But it shall turn again.

JOHN DRINKWATER

## THE IMMORTAL HOUR

### I. SEMI-CHORUS

We have no tears, who are the source of weeping,  
and what is laughter to us, whose laughter first 10  
of laughter woke in man the sweet unsleeping  
hunger and thirst ?

We are the words the poets hear and fail of,  
we are the note beyond the fiddle's cry,  
we for all lovers of beauty are a tale of  
beauty that passes by.

### II. SEMI-CHORUS

Cried a ghost-king by night, " Divine Augustus !  
you tread the ends of the world only to find  
that the long roads of dreams go sweeping past us  
into a world behind. 20

A fleeting throne, a shadow godhead these are,  
whose symbol is the axes and the rod,"  
saying, " There is another kingdom, Cæsar,  
a further heaven, God."

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### I. SEMI-CHORUS

We walk with the wind's feet, and do not rest,  
we walk between the leaves in the high meadows,  
our hair with their green wings of light, our breast  
stained with the soft green shadows.  
Fleeter than the heart's desire, one by one  
we leave delights that are well spoken of,  
and far behind us echo, as we run,  
the tired feet of love.

### II. SEMI-CHORUS

We are impatient of truth, that is no more  
than finite stain upon the infinite, 10  
a fading seamark on a distant shore,  
and we have gone from it,  
whose lips, though grave, are not too grave to smile at  
the heart of man crying in his vext youth :  
“ What is the truth ? ” and to make answer, “ Pilate,  
we are the truth.”

HUMBERT WOLFE

## BYZANTIUM

THE unpurged images of day recede ;  
The Emperor's drunken soldiery are abed ;  
Night resonance recedes, night-walkers' song 20  
After great cathedral gong ;  
A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains  
All that man is,  
All mere complexities,  
The fury and the mire of human veins.

Before me floats an image, man or shade,  
Shade more than man, more image than a shade ;

## BYZANTIUM

For Hades' bobbin bound in mummy-cloth  
May unwind the winding path ;  
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath  
Breathless mouths may summon ;  
I hail the superhuman ;  
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.

Miracle, bird or golden handiwork,  
More miracle than bird or handiwork,  
Planted on the star-lit golden bough,  
Can like the cocks of Hades crow, 10  
Or, by the moon embittered, scorn aloud  
In glory of changeless metal  
Common bird or petal  
And all complexities of mire or blood.

At midnight on the Emperor's pavement flit  
Flames that no faggot feeds, nor steel has lit,  
Nor storm disturbs, flames begotten of flame,  
Where blood-begotten spirits come  
And all complexities of fury leave, 20  
Dying into a dance,  
An agony of trance,  
An agony of flame that cannot singe a sleeve.

Astraddle on the dolphin's mire and blood,  
Spirit after spirit ! The smithies break the flood,  
The golden smithies of the Emperor !  
Marbles of the dancing floor  
Break bitter furies of complexity,  
Those images that yet  
Fresh images beget,  
That dolphin-torn, that gong-tormented sea. 30  
W. B. YEATS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### SHALL WE STILL WRANGLE ?

SHALL we still wrangle,  
Struggle and cry ?  
Oh, why not entangle,  
Live life and let die,  
Together, espoused,  
Body and I ?

Come, THOU, without reason,  
Profit, or ill :  
Without need or season,  
Come, without will :  
Look up and frown not !  
Ah, Love, stand still !

10

What a wild power  
Hast thou over all !  
This earth—thy flower !—  
Thy nothing-at-all !  
This heaven—thy dominion :  
This brain thy thrall !

Art thou the Weaver  
Whose fingers shall tie  
Quiet into fever  
Comfortably—  
That knot for whose secret  
Many men die ?

20

FRANK KENDON

### O LOVE, THE INTEREST ITSELF IN THOUGHTLESS HEAVEN

O LOVE, the interest itself in thoughtless Heaven,  
Make simpler daily the beating of man's heart ; within,  
There in the ring where name and image meet,



## O LOVE

Inspire them with such a longing as will make his  
thought

Alive like patterns a murmur of starlings  
Rising in joy over wolds unwittingly weave ;

Here too on our little reef display your power,  
This fortress perched on the edge of the Atlantic  
scarp,  
The mole between all Europe and the exile-crowded  
sea ;

And make us as Newton was, who in his garden  
watching  
The apple falling towards England, became aware  
Between himself and her of an eternal tie.

For now that dream which so long has contented our  
will,  
I mean, of uniting the dead into a splendid empire,  
Under whose fertilizing flood the Lancashire moss

Sprouted up chimneys, and Glamorgan hid a life  
Grim as a tidal rock-pool's in its glove-shaped valleys,  
Is already retreating into her maternal shadow ;

Leaving the furnaces gasping in the impossible air,  
The flotsam at which Dumbarton gapes and hungers ;  
While upon wind-loved Rowley no hammer shakes

The cluster of mounds like a midget golf course,  
graves  
Of some who created these intelligible dangerous  
marvels ;  
Affectionate people, but crude their sense of glory.

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## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Far-sighted as falcons, they looked down another  
future ;  
For the seed in their loins were hostile, though afraid  
of their pride,  
And, tall with a shadow now, inertly wait.

In bar, in netted chicken-farm, in lighthouse,  
Standing on these impoverished constricting acres,  
The ladies and gentlemen apart, too much alone,

Consider the years of the measured world begun,  
The barren spiritual marriage of stone and water.  
Yet, O, at this very moment of our hopeless sigh

When inland they are thinking their thoughts but are  
watching these islands, 10  
As children in Chester look to Moel Fammau to decide  
On picnics by the clearness or withdrawal of her  
treeless crown,

Some possible dream, long coiled in the ammonite's  
slumber,  
Is uncurling, prepared to lay on our talk and kindness  
Its military silence, its surgeon's idea of pain ;

And out of the Future into actual History,  
As when Merlin, tamer of horses, and his lords to  
whom  
Stonehenge will still a thought, the Pillars passed

And into the undared ocean swung north their prow,  
Drives through the night and star-concealing dawn  
For the virgin roadsteads of our hearts an unwavering  
keel. 21

W. H. AUDEN

## THE ENEMIES

### DEVICE

O THAT I might believe that time  
Is but a measure thrown on things  
That hold existence in a sphere  
Intense alone, and always felt  
In full reality ! For then  
I could evade despondency  
By magnifying to my frame  
The ecstatic beat that night and day  
Pulses within the milk-white walls  
Of mental sloth, eager to break 10  
Into the radiant release  
Of vision divine and precise.

—Time that is a shrouded thought  
Involving earth and life in doubt.

HERBERT READ

## THE ENEMIES

TIME, change and death, these  
Three are Man's enemies.

What ? Time that takes the pain from grief,  
That brings again bud and leaf,  
That sets the child in its mother's arms ?

What ? Change that gives eyes to the blind, 20  
That in decay can freshness find,  
Making old, new ; familiar, strange ?

What ? Death that shuts the gate  
On longing and regret,  
Grief, fear, pain, shame, satiety, and all harms—  
Time and change ?

SYLVIA LYND

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### IN TIME LIKE GLASS

IN time like glass the stars are set,  
And seeming-fluttering butterflies  
Are fixed fast in Time's glass net  
With mountains and with maids' bright eyes.

Above the cold Cordilleras hung  
The wingèd eagle and the Moon :  
The gold, snow-throated orchid sprung  
From gloom where peers the dark baboon :

The Himalayas' white, rapt brows ;  
The jewel-eyed bear that threads their caves ; 10  
The lush plains' lowing herds of cows ;  
That Shadow entering human graves :

All these like stars in Time are set,  
They vanish but can never pass ;  
The Sun that with them fades is yet  
Fast-fixed as they in Time like glass.

W. J. TURNER

### THE ENIGMA

MAN, what is man ? A hasty tool  
Forged in four seconds of distracted fire,  
Unkindly cast into the world to cool  
In the cold wind of loneliness, until 20  
Bracing his metal to the wind reveal  
The beauty of his spirit and desire,  
As every quality of edge and steel  
Soul, the delighted craftsman, can require !



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Westward, ever westward moving,  
Many a hero, many a god,  
Fierce in war and fierce in loving :—  
Men in ancient times who trod

This strange planet knew and named  
Their great deeds, proclaimed their glories,  
While the white stars flinched and flamed :—  
Shades of shades those men ; but stories

Live when speaking lips are dumb :—  
Is it their night-haunting breath,  
Across unnumbered ages come,  
Breathes in my hair the chill of death ?

10

SYLVIA LYND

## POEM FOR AN ANNIVERSARY

ADMIT then and be glad  
Our volcanic age is over.  
A molten rage shook earth from head to toe,  
Seas leapt from their beds,  
World's bedrock boiling up, the terrible lava.  
Now it is not so.

Remember, not regret  
Those cloudy dreams that trod on air  
How distantly reflecting fire below :  
The mating in air, the mute  
Shuddering electric storms, the foul and fair  
Love was used to know.

20

Admire, no more afraid,  
Country made for peace. Earth rent,  
Rocks like prayers racked from the heart, are now  
Landmarks for us and shade :  
Hotfoot to havoc where the lava went,  
Cooler rivers flow.

30



## SHINING DARK

Survey what most survives—  
Love's best, climate and contour fine :  
We have trained the giant lightning to lie low  
And drive our linked lives :  
Those clouds stand not in daydream but for rain,  
And earth has grain to grow.

C. DAY LEWIS

## SHINING DARK

SCATTER grey ash to the darkness, break  
The jar, the brittle urn, to the bleak  
Inhuman north, and the dark wind—

Crumble the trivial husk, the shell, 10  
And claim, O firm substantial Earth,  
The living pulse and the quick sap  
From the green shoot and the cunning skull,

Take it ; and take the unsullied lake,  
The song, the unconquered hill, the alert  
Touch, and the glance, and a man's strength—

Take it ; you can but take it once—  
The gentian hour and the sun's light ;  
Pride of young earth and living limb,

Take : Calcine the amorphous dust, 20  
Destroy the inert substratum, break  
Too late, the pattern : dust attains,  
Quicker than tardy death, the shining dark—

Beethoven deaf and Milton blind,  
Melville, forsaken of the valiant mind,  
Beyond the inhuman pattern, men,  
Broken, ephemeral, undismayed.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### IN YEARS OF CRISIS

OH, for the anodyne  
Of action—for a fight to fight,  
Knowing both end and means were right !  
Alas ! No liberating call is mine.

The world travails. Her groans  
Give me no rest. Can I not make  
Some swift bright effort for her sake ? . . .  
But where ? But how ? A deeper voice disowns

The ego that would lose  
Self-pain in some impetuous  
Tilting at shadows. Credulous  
Are they who Reason's mimic warfare choose !

10

Reason ? She claims her due.  
But if she be not born again  
Of spirit, she must toil in vain,  
And with more anguish the sad earth bestrew.

Not where her engines sweep,  
And all the dust and echoes start,  
Lies the true combat. Nay ! O heart,  
Tunnel into thyself ! Bore deep ! Bore deep !

20

There lurk the enemies :  
A noxious host ! Seek them elsewhere,  
And—though adventure lull thy care,  
And gay illusion gild the enterprise—

Even as thou aim'st the blow  
At the mere visible feint of wrong,  
For all thy vaunting martial song,  
Thou wilt but run yet further from the foe !

## A TIME TO DANCE

Back to thyself, O soul !

There the world's battles must be fought :

There her salvation must be sought :

There only can'st thou make her sorrows whole.

The fight is long, you say ?

The victory will be too late ?

Perchance. Yet—back ! Look to the gate :

To thine own gate ! There is no other way.

GILBERT THOMAS

## A TIME TO DANCE

For those who had the power

of the forest fires that burn

10

Leaving their source in ashes

to flush the sky with fire :

Those whom a famous urn

could not contain, whose passion

Brimmed over the deep grave

and dazzled epitaphs :

For all that have won us wings

to clear the tops of grief,

My friend who within me laughs

bids you dance and sing.

20

Some set out to explore

earth's limit, and little they recked if

Never their feet came near it

outgrowing the need for glory :

Some aimed at a small objective

but the fierce updraught of their spirit

Forced them to the stars.

Are honoured in public who built

The dam that tamed a river ;

or holding the salient for hours

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Against odds, cut off and killed,  
are remembered by one survivor.

All these. But most for those  
whom accident made great,  
As a radiant chance encounter  
of cloud and sunlight grows  
Immortal on the heart :  
whose gift was the sudden bounty  
Of a passing moment, enriches  
the fulfilled eye for ever. 10  
Their spirits float serene  
above time's roughest reaches,  
But their seed is in us and over  
our lives they are evergreen.

C. DAY LEWIS

## THE FOOLS

THEY are the fools of the earth,  
Envy and scorn of the wise,  
Rapt to the wonders of birth,  
Blind with the light in their eyes—  
Blind to the things that deface,  
Seeing the marvel that lies 20  
In the lure of unlimited space  
And the fathomless deep of the skies.

They are the poor of the world,  
Rich with intangible gold ;  
Racing for rainbows unfurled  
Wide over pasture and wold :  
Children of dream and desire,  
Seeking the glory revealed

## REPLY

In daybreaks of passionate fire  
Or grasses and weeds of the field.

They see the Unseen and endure,  
Though the seen is insistent and loud ;  
They cleave to the things that are sure,  
To vision and phantom and cloud.  
Day is an impulse of light,  
Night is a massing of stars ;  
Waves are alive when they smite  
At cavern and crag of their bars.

10

They are the fools of the earth,  
Drunken as men with new wine—  
Born in mysterious birth  
To an heirship of purpose divine :  
Singing where others are dumb,  
Hearing the wonders that speak  
From the heaven and the grasses, they come  
In the pathways that lead to the peak.

ARTHUR L. SALMON

## REPLY

Yes, you, who dared not face your intuition,  
Who stilled as soon as born the puny cry  
That rose remembering immortality—  
Yes, you, who fled as cowards from your vision  
Down the broad ways of easy, cheap decision,  
Hoping that gold and meat and drink could buy  
A tower to hide your secret self-suspicion  
And shut from sight your unattempted sky—  
Yes, you would find it easy to deride  
Our feet that fail where yours have never tried. . . .

20

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### HEARING OF HARVESTS ROTTING IN THE VALLEYS

HEARING of harvests rotting in the valleys,  
Seeing at end of street the barren mountains,  
Round corners coming suddenly on water,  
Knowing them shipwrecked who were launched for  
    islands,  
We honour founders of these starving cities,  
Whose honour is the image of our sorrow.

Which cannot see its likeness in their sorrow  
That brought them desperate to the brink of valleys ;  
Dreaming of evening walks through learned cities,  
They reined their violent horses on the mountains,  
Those fields like ships to castaways on islands,      11  
Visions of green to them that craved for water.

They built by rivers and at night the water  
Running past windows comforted their sorrow ;  
Each in his little bed conceived of islands  
Where every day was dancing in the valleys,  
And all the year trees blossomed on the mountains,  
Where love was innocent, being far from cities.

But dawn came back and they were still in cities ;  
No marvellous creature rose up from the water,      20  
There was still gold and silver in the mountains,  
And hunger was a more immediate sorrow ;  
Although to moping villagers in valleys  
Some waving pilgrims were describing islands.

“ The gods,” they promised, “ visit us from islands,  
Are stalking head-up, lovely through the cities ;  
Now is the time to leave your wretched valleys



## MARINA

And sail with them across the lime-green water ;  
Sitting at their white sides, forget their sorrow,  
The shadow cast across your lives by mountains."

So many, doubtful, perished in the mountains  
Climbing up crags to get a view of islands ;  
So many, fearful, took with them their sorrow  
Which stayed them when they reached unhappy cities ;  
So many, careless, dived and drowned in water ;  
So many, wretched, would not leave their valleys.

It is the sorrow ; shall it melt ? Ah, water 10  
Would gush, flush, green these mountains and these  
valleys,  
And we rebuild our cities, not dream of islands.

W. H. AUDEN

## MARINA

*Quis hic locus, quae regio, quae mundi plaga ?*

WHAT seas what shores what grey rocks and what  
islands  
What water lapping the bow  
And scent of pine and the woodthrush singing through  
the fog  
What images return  
O my daughter.

Those who sharpen the tooth of the dog, meaning  
Death  
Those who glitter with the glory of the humming bird,  
meaning 20  
Death

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Those who sit in the sty of contentment, meaning  
Death  
Those who suffer the ecstasy of the animals, meaning  
Death

Are become unsubstantial, reduced by a wind,  
A breath of pine, and the woodsong fog  
By this grace dissolved in place

What is this face, less clear and clearer  
The pulse in the arm, less strong and stronger—  
Given or lent? more distant than stars and nearer  
than the eye 10

Whispers and small laughter between leaves and  
hurrying feet  
Under sleep, where all the waters meet.

Bowsprit cracked with ice and paint cracked with heat.  
I made this, I have forgotten  
And remember.

The rigging weak and the canvas rotten  
Between one June and another September.  
Made this unknowing, half conscious, unknown, my  
own.

The garboard strake leaks, the seams need caulking.  
This form, this face, this life 20  
Living to live in a world of time beyond me ; let me  
Resign my life for this life, my speech for that un-  
spoken,  
The awakened, lips parted, the hope, the new ships.

What seas what shores what granite islands towards  
my timbers,  
And woodthrush calling through the fog  
My daughter.

T. S. ELIOT

## IMPERMANENT CREATIVENESS

### IMPERMANENT CREATIVENESS

THE spider pendulously waits  
Stranded in the unroaded air,  
The spider's belly-mind creates  
Thoroughfare on thoroughfare.

The fatally inquisitive moth  
Wakes to ambition with a quiver,  
Leaves its bed and board of cloth :  
Wings of moth go flit and shiver.

And all the time on the window-pane  
Shadow fingers of the trees  
Wistfully grope and grope again  
After the indoor mysteries.

10

Over asphalt, tar, and gravel  
My racing model happily purrs,  
Each charted road I yet unravel  
Out of my mind's six cylinders.

Shutters of light, green and red,  
Slide up and down. Like mingled cries,  
Wind and sunlight clip and wed  
Behind the canopy of my eyes.

20

Moth-wings burn. Spiders shrivel ;  
Their bright webs break and cobwebs turn.  
Minds burn. Homers drivél.

Yet all the time on the window-pane  
Shadow fingers of the trees  
Grove, grope, grope again  
After unseen fatalities.

LOUIS MACNEICE

# STARFALL

OUR hopes are fading. Let them fade !  
 There is no lack where they were made.  
 What, though a great wind shake the might  
 Of the tree of Heaven, and, through the night,  
 Scatter the blissful blooms of light ?  
 There's not a tremor in the root,  
 No loss, and, after blossom, fruit.

*The starry petals fall and fade :  
 There is no lack where they were made.*

E. H. VISIAK

# SARASVATI

As bird to nest, when, moodily, 10  
 The storm cloud murmurs nigh the tree,  
 Thus let him flee,  
 Who can to sing,  
 Here hath he calm, and sheltering.

As bee to hive, when, with the sun,  
 Long honey-gathering is done,  
 Who can to sing,  
 There let him flee,  
 This is his cell, his companie.

As child to mother running, where 20  
 The thunder shudders through the air,  
 Thus let him flee,  
 Who can to sing,  
 Here hath he ward, and cherishing.

## I THINK CONTINUALLY

Fly to thy talent ! To thy charm !  
Thy nest, thine hive, thy sheltering arm !  
Who can to sing,  
There let him flee,  
This is, naught else is, certainty.

JAMES STEPHENS

## A LITTLE DISTANCE OFF

THIS world behind the faces that you see,  
The moving lips and eyelids, eyes alight  
Like matches blown by wind, because you stand  
A little distance off and cannot change  
Your isolation for their many, bears 10  
The complete shape of art, the harmony  
And pattern of a film. . . . The film unrolls,  
The world evolves in words and flame of eyes,  
And you withdrawn, a watcher, yet create,  
Yet mould the shape, alter a poise or smile,  
The incidence of light, as one who sees  
Across the windows of a climbing train  
The mountain farms curl backwards, where the paths  
Lead up to glimpses of sun-dazzled walls,  
Conceive strange lives and features, faintly hearing  
The fall of music from behind the trees. 21

JOHN LEHMANN

## I THINK CONTINUALLY OF THOSE WHO WERE TRULY GREAT

I THINK continually of those who were truly great.  
Who, from the womb, remembered the soul's history  
Through corridors of light where the hours are suns  
Endless and singing. Whose lovely ambition  
Was that their lips, still touched with fire,  
Should tell of the Spirit clothed from head to foot in song.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And who hoarded from the Spring branches  
The desires falling across their bodies like blossoms.

What is precious is never to forget  
The essential delight of the blood drawn from ageless  
springs

Breaking through rocks in worlds before our earth.  
Never to deny its pleasure in the morning simple light  
Nor its grave evening demand for love.  
Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother  
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.

Near the snow, near the sun, in the highest fields 10  
See how these names are fêted by the waving grass  
And by the streamers of white cloud  
And whispers of wind in the listening sky.  
The names of those who in their lives fought for life  
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.  
Born of the sun they travelled a short while towards  
the sun,  
And left the vivid air signed with their honour.

STEPHEN SPENDER

## THE GAY

THOSE moon-gilded dancers  
Prankt like butterflies,  
Theirs was such lovely folly 20  
It stayed my rapt eyes :  
But my heart that was pondering  
Was sadly wise.

To be so lighthearted  
What pain was left behind ;  
What fetters fallen gave them  
Unto this airy mind :  
What dark sins were pardoned ;  
What God was kind !



## AN IMPATIENCE

I with long anguish bought  
Joy that was soon in flight ;  
And wondered what these paid  
For years of young delight ;  
Ere they were born what tears  
Through what long night.

All these gay cheeks, light feet,  
Were telling over again,  
But in a heavenly accent,  
A tale of ancient pain  
That, the joy spent, must pass  
To sorrow again.

10

I went into the wilderness  
Of night to be alone,  
Holding sorrow and joy  
Hugged to my heart as one,  
Lest they fly on those wild ways  
And life be undone.

“ A.E.”

## AN IMPATIENCE

GREAT men and learned I can hate,  
And would confound them if I could :  
I saw a simple thing of late,  
A soul that lived in solitude.

20

In anger have I closed the book  
That lusts to make all men believe :  
But the lone wildling creature's look  
Homage demands and shall receive.

Your thoughts are vast, yet shapeless things,  
And never done, like Babel tower :  
But to its life this spirit brings  
Completeness, like the five-leaved flower.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

You end in chaos, as you began ;  
You are made filth and food of flies :  
This loves, and when it ends its span,  
As flowers fall, even so it dies.

Your way, your ends are dread to me,  
When in your hell I share your dream :  
But when this dies, I seem to see  
Five petals on the sliding stream.

RUTH PITTER

## THE BOTTLE

OF green and hexagonal glass,  
With sharp, fluted sides—  
Vaguely transparent these walls,  
Wherein motionless hides  
A simple so potent it can  
To oblivion lull  
The weary, the racked, the bereaved,  
The miserable.

10

Flowers in silent desire  
Their life-breath exhale—  
Self-heal, hellebore, aconite,  
Chamomile, dwale :  
Sharing the same gentle heavens,  
The sun's heat and light,  
And, in the dust at their roots,  
The same shallow night.

20

Each its own livelihood hath,  
Shape, pattern, hue ;  
Age on to age unto these  
Keeping steadfastly true ;

## THE BOTTLE

And, musing amid them, there moves  
A stranger, named Man,  
Who of their ichor distils  
What virtue he can ;

Plucks them ere seed-time to blazon  
His house with their radiant dyes ;  
Prisons their attar in wax ;  
Candies their petals ; denies  
Them freedom to breed in their wont ;  
Buds, fecundates, grafts them at will ;      10  
And with cunningest leechcraft compels  
Their good to his ill.

Intrigue fantastic as this  
Where shall we find ?  
Mute in their beauty they serve him,  
Body and mind.  
And one—but a weed in his wheat—  
Is the poppy—frail, pallid, whose juice  
With its saplike and opiate fume  
Strange dreams will induce      20

Of wonder and horror. And none  
Can silence the soul,  
Wearied of self and of life,  
Earth's darkness and dole,  
More secretly, deeply. But finally ?—  
Waste not thy breath ;  
The words that are scrawled on this phial  
Have for synonym, *death*—

Wicket out into the dark  
That swings but one way ;      30  
Infinite hush in an ocean of silence  
Aeons away—

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Thou forsaken !—even thou !—  
The dread good-bye ;  
The abandoned, the thronged, the watched, the  
unshared—  
Awaiting me—I !

WALTER DE LA MARE

## GREY SAND IS CHURNIN' IN MY LUGS

GREY sand is churnin' in my lugs.  
The munelicht flets, and gantin' there  
The grave o' a' mankind's laid bare  
—On Hell itsel' the drawback rugs !

Nae man can ken his hert until  
The tide o' life uncovers it,  
And horror-struck he sees a pit  
Returnin' life can never fill.

10

HUGH MACDIARMID

## SIMPLICITY

THEY are so many, man's grim miseries.  
His brain is sullen with a thousand scars ;  
Curtains of ambition blind his eyes  
To the quiet patience of the stars.

He is so interwoven into nations,  
Tangled with intrigue and false counter-schemes,  
That he forgets these watchers at their stations  
Where Space, for aeon on aeon, outstreams. 20

He has forgotten the single heart, the one  
And unimpeded purpose of the soul ;  
The love that rises like the morning sun,  
And sets upon a life made whole.

RICHARD CHURCH

## BEYOND THE SODDEN OVERHANGING MIST

### THE SEA

I HAVE come back from the wide sea,  
To breathe the narrow dust again,  
In cities, where men cumber men.  
Why is it that I dare not be  
Alone with Nature? Coming near  
The light and peace of her austere  
Regard, I am filled with shameful fear.

What is this thing the towns have made,  
Into their likeness made anew,  
Until we know not star or dew? 10  
We are afraid of light, afraid  
Of windy space, and naked skies,  
And all in heaven and earth that lies  
Beyond this prison of our eyes.

ARTHUR SYMONS

## BEYOND THE SODDEN OVERHANGING MIST

BEYOND the sodden overhanging mist  
The flutes and cornets of eternity  
Play out their harmonies of light. The earth  
For ever cradled and swathed but faintly feels  
That heavenly music. While the great beams flow  
With endless beat, like a symphonic stream, 20  
Only the tiny pulse of living hearts  
Betrays earth's conscience; and man her god  
Drugged with the rhythm of his own machines  
Sleeps to that also; for man's soul is shut,  
His fount of music and great summer glory:

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

He has no bloom of cheek, no fire in his eye,  
No light of love, no kindly power, no joy :—  
Behold him in the street a fearful slave,  
Sallow and sleek and dead ; while God apart  
By river-banks weeps in the willow trees.

MICHAEL MCKENNA

## MORNING

Do not awake the academic scholars,  
Tradition's hairy god last night departed.  
This morn the huge iconoclastic rollers  
Blot out the roads where long the Spirit carted  
The prayerful dream, the scientific load, 10  
The cobwebbed preacher-stuff of Portobello.  
To-day will find a new straw-bodied god  
Much brighter than the other morbid fellow.

And when they wake—the scholars—they will be  
Toothless, unvoiced and maybe half-way gone,  
With nothing but a clouded memory  
To lead them to the hieroglyphic stone  
On which old Scholarship had proudly scratched  
A list of doors that Truth has left unlatched.

PATRICK KAVANAGH

## TO PENETRATE THAT ROOM

To penetrate that room is my desire, 20  
The extreme attic of the mind, that lies  
Just beyond the last bend in the corridor.  
Writing I do it. Phrases, poems are keys.  
Loving's another way (but not so sure).



## UNDER THE EYELID

A fire's in there, I think, there's truth at last  
Deep in a lumber chest. Sometimes I'm near,  
But draughts puff out the matches, and I'm lost.  
Sometimes I'm lucky, find a key to turn,  
Open an inch or two—but always then  
A bell rings, someone calls, or cries of "fire"  
Arrest my hand when nothing's known or seen,  
And running down the stairs again I mourn.

JOHN LEHMANN

## UNDER THE EYELID

UNDER the lid the pictures come and go  
And splash their changing colours to and fro : 10  
First they are carried on a beam of light  
That from vibration turns to quick delight :  
But when you drop the gentle blue vein'd blind  
They flicker from the cupboards of your mind,  
Where all the bright collections you have made  
On dim forgotten shelves are thickly laid  
Till they can cross the forefront of your brain  
And conquer your sweet consciousness again ;  
Then one by one they flicker into sight  
Driving your thoughts before them in a fright, 20  
And turn your cogitations quite astray  
In the bewildered mirror of their way.

Now if their flashing sequence I could guide  
By slipping careful words in where they hide,  
My eyelid's treasures, roughened by my tongue,  
Catching with yours to move your thoughts along,  
I should be happy in my bold invasion  
And lead you to forgive this fond intrusion.

BRYAN GUINNESS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### TO THE SURVIVORS

THE rust that paints their cities red  
And makes their cast-iron idols reel :  
The russet locust-swarm that's spread  
Upon their wilting crops of steel :—

This gift of our protecting Sire,  
The Solar Christ, to purge the lands—  
Is like the good Promethean fire  
At which to warm our scatheless hands.

By it the human heart relumed,  
Shall blaze once more with ruby light— 10  
The strong shall seize it unconsumed,  
The rest will crumble at its sight.

The brave from out its grudging crust  
Will pull the treasure that it keeps—  
Within the red sheath of the rust,  
The white Excalibur that sleeps :—

One from its ash breathe new desire ;  
• One from its embers snatch the Star  
That glances with a triple fire  
And tips the Trident of Cailar :— 20

One will blow flames, when nations drowse,  
With which to burn prophetic lips :  
And some find shares, with cruiser-prows,  
To heave the curling turf like ships.

Then, like Niagara set free,  
Ride on, you fine Commando : vain  
Were looking back, for all you'd see  
Were " Charlies " running for their train !

## WHO STANDS ERECT UPON THE EDGE

For none save those are worthy birth  
Who neither life nor death will shun :  
And we plough deepest in the Earth  
Who ride the nearest to the Sun.

ROY CAMPBELL

## RETURN

RESURRECT, resurrect,  
The senses and the intellect,  
Swing and stride and march again  
In thundering charges down the plain.  
Carry the dry logs to the fire,  
Relight pride, resurge desire, 10  
And spin the dead leaves down the wind,  
And let in winter on the mind.

Out with old banners, let them fly,  
Nor care a hang for symbolry :  
I am I, and close to hand  
My world to shape or understand.  
Life goes on, once more I live,  
Once more the open skies can give  
Some native force, some natural power,  
And flaming triumph through an hour. 20

JULIAN BELL

## WHO STANDS ERECT UPON THE EDGE

Who stands erect upon the edge  
Precipitate for new adventure  
—Forgoes the sitting on the hedge  
The timid facebothways composure

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Is hero too with wizard sword  
His perilous dignity is sure  
—The master of a green accord  
Between flesh and the pulse of nature.

CLERE PARSONS

### TO HIS OWN MIND

O WEAVER, will you not forget  
To spin your airy web and slight ?  
Too nimble Dancer, dancing yet  
On the thin meshes of the night !  
Beneath my feet your ropes are set,  
You hang the stars within my brain ;— 10  
I too could weave a wiry net  
And dance upon a thoughtful chain,

But that, in pauses, I have heard  
Dim sounds that mock the polished mind,  
Have seen the lovely and absurd  
Things of the country of the blind ;  
A country where a flaming word  
Found by an idiot in his sleep  
Is yet the peering poised white bird  
That scans the pavement of the deep. 20  
GEOFFREY SCOTT

### NATIVITY

A FLOWER has opened in my heart . . .  
What flower is this, what flower of spring,  
What simple, secret thing ?  
It is the peace that shines apart,  
The peace of daybreak skies that bring  
Clear song and wild swift wing.

## THE PRISONER

Heart's miracle of inward light,  
What powers unknown have sown your seed  
And your perfection freed? . . .  
O flower within me wondrous white,  
I know you only as my need  
And my unsealed sight.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

## CALM AS THE MOON

WHAT shall be the signal for departure?  
We, who have departure curled up in us  
Like the red wings of a moth in a cocoon,  
Are walking through the town's confused alarms, 10  
Calm, to those who meet us, as the moon.

Those who meet us cannot see under the shell:  
What shall be our signal for departure  
From the habit and the self we have outgrown?

Wait, we shall come to it any time soon,—  
The crying of cocks in riverside farms,  
A flush of sunlight on a March afternoon,  
The thunder of engines in a glass-roofed terminus,  
The advance out of shadow and the crowd of lifted  
arms.

JOHN LEHMANN

## THE PRISONER

EVERY morning the prisoner hears 20  
Calls to action and words of warning:  
They fall not on deaf but indifferent ears.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Free speech, fresh air are denied him now,  
Are not for one who is growing thin  
Between four walls of Roman thickness.

From his cell he sees the meetings begin,  
The vehement look on the orator's brow  
And the listeners warped by want and sickness.

His old wound throbs as old wounds will,  
The summer morning makes his head feel light,  
Painful the sunlight on the whitewashed sill,  
Trembling he awaits the ever-fruitful night,

10

For then dreams many-formed appear  
Teeming with truths that public lips ignore,  
And naked figures struggle from the sea  
Shipwrecked, to be clothed on shore,

And words no orator utters are said  
Such as the wind through mouths of ivy forms  
Or snails with silver write upon the dead  
Bark of an ilex after April storms.

While flights of bombers streak his patch of sky,  
While speakers rant and save the world with books, 20  
While at the front the first battalions die,  
Over the edge of thought itself he looks,

Tiptoe along a knife-edge he slowly travels,  
Hears the storm roaring, the serpent hiss,  
And the frail rope he hangs by, twisting, unravels,  
As he steps so lightly over the abyss.

WILLIAM PLOMER



## EVENSTAR

### MIDNIGHT

I HAVE thrown wide my window  
And looked upon the night,  
And seen Arcturus burning  
In chaos, proudly bright.

The powdered stars above me  
Have littered heaven's floor—  
A thousand I remember ;  
I saw a myriad more.

I have forgotten thousands,  
For deep and deep between,  
My mind built up the darkness  
Of space, unheard, unseen.

10

I held my hands to heaven  
To hold perfection there,  
But through my fingers streaming  
Went time, as thin as air ;

And I must close my window  
And draw a decent blind  
To screen from outer darkness  
The chaos of the mind.

20

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## EVENSTAR

EVENSTAR, still evenstar  
If this twilight thou dost shine  
On a more unhappy head,  
On tears lonelier than mine,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Vainer prayers and deeper sighs,  
Take, sweet spirit, thou that art  
Comforter of our despairs  
All the prayers perforce unsaid,  
All the sighs I cannot sigh,  
All the tears I cannot shed ;  
Fill his eyes and flood his heart,  
Who, my everlasting kin,  
Broods afar, unknown, apart.  
Bring, ah bring him that surcease  
From unsolaceable pain,  
Which nor prayers, nor tears, nor sighs,  
No, nor even the divine  
Presence of thy eternal peace  
Can, O evenstar, make mine.

10

ROBERT NICHOLS

## BECAUSE OF THE MUTE DISTANCES OF SPACE

BECAUSE of the mute distances of space,  
The orbèd reign of stars, the lonely lamps  
Of planets like a bracelet round their sun,  
I shut my soul at night and ceased to sing  
For my too deep longing :  
And so I listened to the lark at morn  
Ascending from the corn  
And mingled all my music with his song,  
Till singing he and I  
Seemed to have filled the whole eternal sky.  
But when at length the fairy face of day  
Had vanishèd away,  
The naked jewels in the sword of truth  
Stole all my notes, so I could only stare,  
Like a dumb babe, at air.

20

30

MICHAEL MCKENNA

## THE CHESTNUT CASTS HIS FLAMBEAUX

### THE CHESTNUT CASTS HIS FLAMBEAUX

THE chestnut casts his flambeaux, and the flowers  
Stream from the hawthorn on the wind away,  
The doors clap to, the pane is blind with showers.  
Pass me the can, lad ; there's an end of May.

There's one spoilt spring to scant our mortal lot,  
One season ruined of our little store.  
May will be fine next year as like as not :  
Oh ay, but then we shall be twenty-four.

We for a certainty are not the first  
Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled 10  
Their hopeful plans to emptiness, and cursed  
Whatever brute and blackguard made the world.

It is in truth iniquity on high  
To cheat our sentenced souls of aught they crave,  
And mar the merriment as you and I  
Fare on our long fool's-errand to the grave.

Iniquity it is ; but pass the can.  
My lad, no pair of kings our mothers bore ;  
Our only portion is the estate of man :  
We want the moon, but we shall get no more. 20

If here to-day the cloud of thunder lours  
To-morrow it will hie on far behests ;  
The flesh will grieve on other bones than ours  
Soon, and the soul will mourn in other breasts.

The troubles of our proud and angry dust  
Are from eternity, and shall not fail.  
Bear them we can, and if we can we must.  
Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.

A. E. HOUSMAN

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### LAST POEM

SHE does not choose to tread that way of faith  
Which once she trod in plain simplicity  
And duty. Now shower down your pity

Or make her the victim of your wrath and warn her  
"Arrogant fool you will return in time  
Sorry for your vulgar self-sufficiency "

Pray for her then as one who dared incur  
The anger of every god and each creator  
But who revered the mind's integrity  
Whose hand was against strife  
Whose love for the lowly.

10

CLERE PARSONS

### WE ARE THE SAILORS OF A STRANGER SEA

WE are the sailors of a stranger sea  
The standfast pioneers of unknown waterlands  
Therefore let us not awhile turn back  
Because no land horizons our grey life.

Rather because we sail our course close-hauled  
Let us stand erect and face the biting wind  
Like sailors, sinews halliard-taut  
To stand the strain. With firm and even steps  
Let us glide towards rain and blinding mist  
With the fine effrontery of clean white bows  
To quell the swelling mutiny of waves.  
And let us not forget our heritage  
The glory of seasoned timbers caulked by time  
The vessel and reward we call our home.

20

JAMES BRAMWELL

## THE CONFLICT

### THE CONFLICT

I SANG as one  
Who on a tilting deck sings  
To keep their courage up, though the wave hangs  
That shall cut off their sun.

As storm-cocks sing,  
Flinging their natural answer in the wind's teeth,  
And care not if it is waste of breath  
Or birth-carol of spring.

As ocean-flyer clings  
To height, to the last drop of spirit driving on 10  
While yet ahead is land to be won  
And work for wings.

Singing I was at peace,  
Above the clouds, outside the ring :  
For sorrow finds a swift release in song  
And pride its poise.

Yet living here,  
As one between two massing powers I live  
Whom neutrality cannot save  
Nor occupation cheer.

20

None such shall be left alive :  
The innocent wing is soon shot down,  
And private stars fade in the blood-red dawn  
Where two worlds strive.

The red advance of life  
Contracts pride, calls out the common blood,  
Beats song into a single blade,  
Makes a depth-charge of grief.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Move then with new desires,  
For where we used to build and love  
Is no man's land, and only ghosts can live  
Between two fires.

C. DAY LEWIS

### ROCK PILGRIM

LET the damned ride their earwigs to Hell, but let me  
not join them.  
For why should I covet the tide, or in meanness  
purloin them?  
They are sick, they have chosen the path of their  
apple-green folly.  
I will turn to my mountains of light, and my mauve  
melancholy.

Let their hands get the primrose—God wreathe me !—  
of lowland and lagland ;  
For me the small yellow tormentil of heath-hill and  
crag-land.  
Man's days are as grass, his thought but as thistle-  
seed wind-sown ;  
I will plod up the pass, and nourish the turf with my  
shin-bone.

I should stay for a day, I should seek in high faith  
to reclaim them ?  
But the threadbare beat straw, and the hole in my  
shirt will enflame them.  
They are blinder than moles, for they see but the flies  
in God's honey ;  
And they eat off their soles ; and they kneel to the  
Moloch of money.



## THE WEST

They have squeezed my mouth dumb ; their clutch  
for a year yet may rankle.  
I will tie Robin Death to my side, with his claw on  
my ankle.  
Let them come, stick and drum, and assail me across  
the grey boulders,  
I will flutter my toes, and rattle the scree on their  
shoulders.  
Let the damned get to Hell and be quick, while  
decision is early.  
I will tie a red rose to my stick, and plant my feet  
squarely.  
My back shall be blind on their spite, and my rump  
on their folly ;  
I will plod up the ridge to the right, past the crimson-  
green holly.

HERBERT PALMER

## THE WEST

BEYOND the moor and mountain crest  
—Comrade, look not on the west— 10  
The sun is down and drinks away  
From air and land the lees of day.

The long cloud and the single pine  
Sentinel the ending line,  
And out beyond it, clear and wan,  
Reach the gulfs of evening on.

The son of woman turns his brow  
West from forty counties now,  
And, as the edge of heaven he eyes,  
Thinks eternal thoughts, and sighs. 20

Oh wide's the world, to rest or roam,  
With change abroad and cheer at home,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Fights and furloughs, talk and tale,  
Company and beef and ale.

But if I front the evening sky  
Silent on the west look I,  
And my comrade, stride for stride,  
Paces silent at my side.

Comrade, look not on the west :  
'Twill have the heart out of your breast ;  
'Twill take your thoughts and sink them far,  
Leagues beyond the sunset bar. 10

Oh lad, I fear that yon's the sea  
Where they fished for you and me,  
And there, from whence we both were ta'en,  
You and I shall drown again.

Send not on your soul before  
To dive from that beguiling shore,  
And let not yet the swimmer leave  
His clothes upon the sands of eve.

Too fast to yonder strand forlorn  
We journey, to the sunken bourn, 20  
To flush the fading tinges eyed  
By other lads at eventide.

Wide is the world, to rest or roam,  
And early 'tis for turning home :  
Plant your heel on earth and stand,  
And let's forget our native land.

When you and I are spilt on air  
Long we shall be strangers there ;  
Friends of flesh and bone are best :  
Comrade, look not on the west. 30

A. E. HOUSMAN

## BELIEF

### CREED

THE things that touch me nearest are not those  
That bring or money or repute to men :  
A schoolboy angered by a spluttering pen,  
A burnet moth around a young wild-rose,  
Eight notes of Bach, a line of Landor's prose,  
The vagabond asleep on straw, the " When ? "  
On Love's frank lips, the glow-worm in the glen,  
Gray peace before the cock of morning crows.

I am an eavesdropper of loveliness,  
And in the humble hope I find my food ; 10  
My daily labour is a walking sleep :  
And, though I know the slothful heart's distress,  
I see how Indolence hath her own good,  
And bind her sheaves, and store them fast and deep.  
E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

## BELIEF

A THIEF has got his creed of thieving,  
Birds their religion of the sky,  
Scholars and saints their keen believing—  
And all are justified but I.

Nothing I know : I only feel  
The old unknowledgeable tide : 20  
Friendships, revealings, loves—the wheel  
By which men live and yet have died.  
ROBERT GITTINGS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### NOTHING IS ENOUGH

NOTHING is enough !  
No, though our all be spent—  
Heart's extremest love,  
Spirit's whole intent,  
All that nerve can feel,  
All that brain invent,—  
Still beyond appeal  
Will Divine Desire  
Yet more excellent  
Precious cost require  
Of this mortal stuff,—  
Never be content  
Till ourselves be fire.  
Nothing is enough !

10

LAURENCE BINYON

### I SPEND MY DAYS VAINLY

I SPEND my days vainly,  
Not in delight ;  
Though the world is elate,  
And tastes her joys finely.

Here wrapped in slow musing  
Lies my dark mind,  
To no music attuned  
Save its own, and despising

20

The lark for remoteness,  
The thrush for bold lying,  
The soft wind for blowing,  
And the round sun for brightness.

## THE SECRET DAY

O tarry for me, sweet ;  
I shall stir, I shall wake !  
And the melody you seek  
Shall be lovely, though late.

FRANK KENDON

## THE SECRET DAY

My yesterday has gone, has gone and left me tired,  
And now to-morrow comes and beats upon the door ;  
So I have built To-day, the day that I desired,  
Lest joy come not again, lest peace return no more,  
Lest comfort come no more.

So I have built To-day, a proud and perfect day, 10  
And I have built the towers of cliffs upon the sands ;  
The foxgloves and the gorse I planted on my way ;  
The thyme, the velvet thyme, grew up beneath my  
hands,  
Grew pink beneath my hands.

So I have built To-day, more precious than a dream ;  
And I have painted peace upon the sky above ;  
And I have made immense and misty seas, that seem  
More kind to me than life, more fair to me than  
love—  
More beautiful than love.

And I have built a house—a house upon the brink 20  
Of high and twisted cliffs ; the sea's low singing fills it ;  
And there my Secret Friend abides, and there I think  
I'll hide my heart away before to-morrow kills it—  
A cold to-morrow kills it.

Yes, I have built To-day, a wall against To-morrow,  
So let To-morrow knock—I shall not be afraid,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

For none shall give me death, and none shall give  
me sorrow,  
And none shall spoil this darling day that I have made.  
No storm shall stir my sea. No night but mine shall  
shade  
This day that I have made.

STELLA BENSON

## MEN IMPROVE WITH THE YEARS

I AM worn out with dreams ;  
A weather-worn, marble triton  
Among the streams ;  
And all day long I look  
Upon this lady's beauty  
As though I had found in book 10  
A pictured beauty,  
Pleased to have filled the eyes  
Or the discerning ears,  
Delighted to be but wise,  
For men improve with the years ;  
And yet, and yet,  
Is this my dream, or the truth ?  
O would that we had met  
When I had my burning youth ;  
But I grow old among dreams, 20  
A weather-worn, marble triton  
Among the streams.

W. B. YEATS

## TO GROW OLDER

To grow older is this :  
To feel on the first rose  
The breath malign and fell



## THE TIME OF DREAMS

Of the first icicle,  
And in the earliest kiss  
The handshake of farewell.

To turn at length heart-craven :  
Deliberately to close  
Your senses to the spring  
Because her wiles must bring  
December round again ;  
To shun love's foothills even,  
Fearing to reach the crest  
Of joy, and see beyond  
No choice but to descend  
Those slopes of less-than-best  
Which are most kin to pain.

10

And in the end to find  
Sole refuge in the mind—  
That princely solitude  
Where the meek seasons spin  
Swift, slow, to suit your will,  
Or whirl a-widdershin  
From rose to daffodil ;  
Where love no sequence keeps,  
But at your bidding leaps  
—Bold, gentle, sweet, or hot—  
From mood to mood,  
Yet wanes not, withers not.

20

JAN STRUTHER

## THE TIME OF DREAMS

WHAT sweet, what happy days had I,  
When dreams made Time Eternity !  
Before I knew this body's breath  
Could not take life in without death.

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

As fresh as any field of grass  
This breath of life was, then ; it was  
An orchard with more fruit than leaf,  
And every owl enjoyed his grief.  
No Winter's morn, when I went forth,  
Could force on me a sunless North ;  
When I would watch the bees for hours  
Clinging to their love-bitten flowers ;  
And, dreaming to the songs of birds,  
Would still delay my deeds and words ; 10  
And every common day could place  
A shining Sunday in my face.  
O for my greater days to come,  
When I shall travel far from home !  
On seas that have no shade in sight,  
Into the woods that have no light ;  
Over the mountains' heads so tall,  
Cut by the clouds to pieces small ;  
Across wide plains that give my eye  
No house or tree to measure them by. 20  
And all the wonders I shall see  
In some old city new to me ;  
Haunting the ships and docks, and then  
To hear the strange, sea-faring men  
That with their broken English prove  
More lands than one to roam and love.  
What sweet, what happy days had I—  
When dreams made Time Eternity !

W. H. DAVIES

## COMPENSATION

BRIGHT-EYED youngster, say,  
If you can read the future, 30  
Will you regret to-day,  
The wild surprise of nature ;

## BUCH DER LIEDER

Bird-song, bloom, and rapture,  
And lips you dare not capture  
Yet soon will touch with your own  
And find the secret flown ?

I once was your age, truly  
Bold and shy by turn.  
I took my maiden duly,  
And found still more to learn.  
Soon gone was that sweet fooling ;  
Life brought a greyer schooling.  
Yet since that harsh betrayal  
Joy has not seemed so frail.

10

RICHARD CHURCH

## BUCH DER LIEDER

BE these the selfsame verses  
That once when I was young  
Charm'd me with dancing magic  
To love their foreign tongue,

Delicate buds of passion,  
Gems of a master's art,  
That broke forth rivalling Nature  
In love-songs of the heart ;

20

Like fresh leaves of the woodland  
Whose trembling screens would house  
The wanton birdies courting  
Upon the springing boughs ?

Alas, how now they are wither'd !  
And fallen from the skies  
In yellowy tawny crumple  
Their tender wreckage lies,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And all their ravisht beauty  
    Strewn 'neath my feet to-day  
Rustles as I go striding  
    Upon my wintry way.

ROBERT BRIDGES

### THE FIDDLER AND THE GIRL

BUT the root of the matter is I am growing old,  
And kicking at the barriers. There's grey in my hair,  
An ice-cold sediment dropping through my veins,  
My body has lost its spring, my brain its swiftness ;  
Poor am I as a mouse in a timber-yard,  
And I am glad that there must come an End. 10

I lived on hope once ; felt my spirit uplifted  
By some dream-prospect of established greatness,  
Hoped for a Crown and wore it, Power and was rich ;  
Possessed through every misfortune and restraint ;  
In Desolation was a kind of king.  
The regal Marlowe built not firmer than I,  
For Getting was just Hoping. Now Life's different.  
All's going away, fading, and slipping from me,  
And Death seems friendly.

But then, yesterday, 20  
As I sat fiddling on my slackened heartstrings,  
Brooding and biting, wishing Death would take me,  
In squalid disillusion of tired spirit  
Tracing upon the ever-perishing page  
An acid sonnet with some malice in it,  
There stole on me a hand—as if from Heaven—  
Your hand.—You entered, and stood looking at me.  
And now my fiddle-strings grow taut again,  
And there's sweet music nestling in the frame.

## THE FIDDLER AND THE GIRL

So I can say, "To the winds with Hope! What's  
Hope!"

Say it unscathed, set free from wrath and pain.  
What's Hope to me when the instrument is speaking!  
Only by this I pay my lease of life.  
My fiddle sings! Let hopes die where they soared.

Oh, I'll not chide you for your swift intrusion!  
Nor make you shy that you have given me kindness  
As senseless as the sun's tap on the hill  
Or the soft-footed south wind's wanderings.  
Heaven's sense it was, as sudden as wind or sun; 10  
Yet timely, just a touch from the blue sky.

And the root of the matter is I am growing old  
And you've half saved me.—No! it is not Passion.  
If it should ever shake you, make no sign,  
Nor let your thought run on my slain discretion  
That I should sing of you 'neath sun or star,  
You the Sun's flag; for I kneel down to the Sun  
And the whole curving radiance of blue sky,  
That breadth that holds all Wonder and pure Reason.  
Though there's a stretch of severing years between us, 20  
Deep chasms of night and tired experience,  
You a fair child, and I pushed back by Time.

No! there's no union of our outward selves,  
The mortal trappings of the central sense,  
You so aglow, I withering; you the wild rose,  
Song's eglantine, the hyacinth cupula,  
Or the juniper, Elijah's cloaking tower,  
Any fair flower that's fragrant in the Spring,  
The Spring itself, and then the Sun of Spring.

You were all that to me, like a maid to a lover, 30  
Touching my darkness with soft kindling fingers,  
The rays of your spirit shining through my spirit

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Till I was pinned to Heaven and the light again,  
I Earth's sad clod, and you a shaft from the Sun.

How shall I thank you? Praise what lies beyond you  
And all about you, and in the heart of Day;  
Do it in this, the bow along the wire,  
Scattering a trail of music on the silence  
As I press forward, acolyte, and knowing  
I can do nothing save respond and follow  
As the Earth follows the Sun, yet does not follow—  
Its worn face tilting to the fiery radiance— 10  
Swinging around in the wide severing void.

But I'd speak plainer, change the speech's figure.  
The body's between us, that's the actual severance,  
Yet almost nothing if I break with Time  
And let the clean-stripped spirit touch the spirit.  
In any thousand years what's death and change!  
What's blight and age, or any sudden thing  
That starts new life out of life's perishing!

There are no walls between us, only chasms,  
The abysses of the flesh, the sinews' cleavage, 20  
(Both voice and sight go out upon the uplands)  
And these will close as they have closed before.  
The Spirit-summit towers firm through Death and  
Change;  
And I'll see plainer ere the century's gone,  
And know what stole upon me in strange guise.  
For every Spring it comes—shakes me, then goes.

HERBERT PALMER

## A PRIVATE MAN ON PUBLIC MEN

WHEN my contemporaries were driving  
Their coach through Life with strain and striving,



COOLE AND BALLYLEE, 1931

And raking riches into heaps,  
And ably pleading in the Courts  
With smart rejoinders and retorts,  
Or where the Senate nightly keeps  
Its vigils, till their fames were fanned  
By rumour's tongue throughout the land,  
I lived in quiet, screened, unknown,  
Pondering upon some stick or stone,  
Or news of some rare book or bird  
Latterly bought, or seen, or heard, 10  
Not wishing ever to set eyes on  
The surging crowd beyond the horizon,  
Tasting years of moderate gladness  
Mellowed by sundry days of sadness,  
Shut from the noise of the world without,  
Hearing but dimly its rush and rout,  
Unenvying those amid its roar,  
Little endowed, not wanting more.

THOMAS HARDY

COOLE AND BALLYLEE, 1931

UNDER my window-ledge the waters race,  
Otters below and moor-hens on the top, 20  
Run for a mile undimmed in Heaven's face  
Then darkening through "dark" Raftery's "cellar"  
drop,

Run underground, rise in a rocky place  
In Coole demesne, and there to finish up  
Spread to a lake and drop into a hole.  
What's water but the generated soul?

Upon the borders of that lake's a wood  
Now all dry sticks under a wintry sun,  
And in a copse of beeches there I stood,  
For Nature's pulled her tragic buskin on 30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And all the rant's a mirror of my mood :  
At sudden thunder of the mounting swan  
I turned about and looked where branches break  
The glittering reaches of the flooded lake.

Another emblem there ! That stormy white  
But seems a concentration of the sky ;  
And, like the soul, it sails into the sight  
And in the morning's gone, no man knows why ;  
And is so lovely that it sets to right  
What knowledge or its lack had set awry, 10  
So arrogantly pure, a child might think  
It can be murdered with a spot of ink.

Sound of a stick upon the floor, a sound  
From somebody that toils from chair to chair ;  
Beloved books that famous hands have bound,  
Old marble heads, old pictures everywhere ;  
Great rooms where travelled men and children found  
Content or joy ; a last inheritor  
Where none has reigned that lacked a name and fame  
Or out of folly into folly came. 20

A spot whereon the founders lived and died  
Seemed once more dear than life ; ancestral trees  
Or gardens rich in memory glorified  
Marriages, alliances and families,  
And every bride's ambition satisfied.  
Where fashion or mere fantasy decrees  
Man shifts about—all that great glory spent—  
Like some poor Arab tribesman and his tent.

We were the last romantics—chose for theme  
Traditional sanctity and loveliness ; 30  
Whatever's written in what poets name  
The book of the people ; whatever most can bless  
The mind of man or elevate a rhyme ;

## AN ANCIENT TO ANCIENTS

But all is changed, that high horse riderless,  
Though mounted in that saddle Homer rode  
Where the swan drifts upon a darkening flood.

W. B. YEATS

## AN ANCIENT TO ANCIENTS

WHERE once we danced, where once we sang,  
Gentlemen,  
The floors are sunken, cobwebs hang,  
And cracks creep ; worms have fed upon  
The doors. Yea, sprightlier times were then  
Than now, with harps and tabrets gone,  
Gentlemen !

10

Where once we rowed, where once we sailed,  
Gentlemen,  
And damsels took the tiller, veiled  
Against too strong a stare (God wot  
Their fancy, then or anywhen !)  
Upon that shore we are clean forgot,  
Gentlemen !

We have lost somewhat, afar and near,  
Gentlemen,  
The thinning of our ranks each year  
Affords a hint we are nigh undone,  
That we shall not be ever again  
The marked of many, loved of one,  
Gentlemen.

20

In dance the polka hit our wish,  
Gentlemen,  
The paced quadrille, the spry schottische,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

“ Sir Roger.”—And in opera spheres  
The “ Girl ” (the famed “ Bohemian ”),  
And “ Trovatore,” held the ears,  
Gentlemen.

This season’s paintings do not please,  
Gentlemen,  
Like Etty, Mulready, Maclise ;  
Throbbing romance has waned and wanned ;  
No wizard wields the witching pen  
Of Bulwer, Scott, Dumas, and Sand, 10  
Gentlemen.

The bower we shrined to Tennyson,  
Gentlemen,  
Is roof-wrecked ; damp that drip upon  
Sagged seats, the creeper-nails are rust,  
The spider is sole denizen ;  
Even she who voiced those rhymes is dust,  
Gentlemen !

We who met sunrise sanguine-souled,  
Gentlemen, 20  
Are wearing weary. We are old ;  
These younger press ; we feel our rout  
Is imminent to Aïdes’ den,—  
That evening shades are stretching out,  
Gentlemen !

And yet, though ours be failing frames,  
Gentlemen,  
So were some others’ history names,  
Who trod their track light-limbed and fast  
As these youth, and not alien 30  
From enterprise, to their long last,  
Gentlemen.

## THE DESERTED HOUSE

Sophocles, Plato, Socrates,  
Gentlemen,  
Pythagoras, Thucydides,  
Herodotus, and Homer,—yea,  
Clement, Augustin, Origen,  
Burnt brightlier towards their setting-day,  
Gentlemen.

And ye, red-lipped and smooth-browed ; list,  
Gentlemen ;  
Much is there waits you we have missed ;            10  
Much lore we leave you worth the knowing,  
Much, much has lain outside our ken :  
Nay, rush not : time serves : we are going,  
Gentlemen.

THOMAS HARDY

## THE DESERTED HOUSE

KNOWING the house deserted, amid the darkness of  
trees  
That seemed to my memories  
Flat as vernal scenery upon a stage,  
Greatly daring I came to the house again ;  
Came straight, for I knew its intimacies ;  
Broke through bracken and wood to the tower with  
the weather vane ;  
Came to visit the place  
I thought not to visit again.

And knowing the secret ways between tree and tree,  
I came through undergrowth  
To the falling folly once more,  
Where we played together, my brother and I, and he  
Who died by his own hand, another brother to me.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

But the folly had gone ; and down I kneeled on the  
floor  
That remained, a great slab of stone, the tombstone of  
three.

And the ghosts rose up : children who trotted beside  
Me, a child again. But alone I had not died.  
And that day I feared the deserted house, and the  
brake,  
The trees and the glades of the wood,  
I feared the forsaken garden,  
For none of the living were there, and another ghost,  
He who gave me life (and his spirit I feared the  
most),  
Walked, silent, forever alone alongside the lake 10  
Whom no living woman had understood.

I came yet a second time to that house and garden,  
With the one whom I love, saying : " Come, let us  
enter the house,  
That I feared so before to do."  
And we climbed by a window and stood  
On the old blank landing I knew,  
Where, a child, on the stairway to bed,  
In a corner I huddled alone to look at the stars,  
Where first the awe and fear of infinity took me.  
We went up the hollow stairs and after us followed the  
dead. 20  
In the empty nursery I cried : " There, there was the  
bed,  
Where she beat me and shook me,  
When I cried with terror at night."

Then the one whom I love  
Held me long on that spot, held me deep,  
Murmuring : " Here is the healing,  
Here is the answer, the pardon."



## SONNET

Since when I play with the ghosts in the house and the  
garden,  
In dreams,  
When asleep.

But my love took another love  
New Year when the snow was deep.

So I came a third time,  
Like a leveret over the snow,  
To stand at the roots of the nursery lime,  
When the squares of the windows were leaden,  
Not golden as long ago. 10

And I knew that the children played  
With drum and painted toys,  
Whilst our favourite, the suicide, walked the landing ;  
Now the ghosts were I and the boys.

The boys that cook brown trout with me  
On the fire in the folly, in dreams,  
So the tramp says : " The hares  
Have been here again, it seems."

DOROTHY WELLESLEY

## SONNET

You must say No to this that seems so living,  
Loosen your hold, and let it pass you by. 20  
There can be no atonement, no forgiving,  
Until this thought of clemency shall die.  
You have known pity and supremely won it,  
Have leant upon its form and known it true,  
Then call on Death to set his numbness on it,  
It must be only memory to you.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Not till the deeper loving has undone it  
Can there be any greater thing to do.—  
You must say Yes to this annihilation  
For only so can spirit travel free  
And anguish rend itself in consummation  
As buds that break on April's weeping tree.

NORA K. McCAUSLAND

## EPITAPH

SIR, you should notice me : I am the Man ;  
I am Good Fortune : I am satisfied.  
All I desired, more than I could desire,  
I have : everything has gone right with me. 10  
Life was a hiding-place that played me false ;  
I croucht ashamed, and still was seen and scorned :  
But now I am not seen. I was a fool,  
And now I know what wisdom dare not know :  
For I know Nothing. I was a slave, and now  
I have ungoverned freedom and the wealth  
That cannot be conceived : for I have Nothing.  
I lookt for beauty and I longed for rest,  
And now I have perfection : nay, I am  
Perfection : I am Nothing, I am dead. 20

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE

## GERONTION

*Thou hast nor youth nor age  
But as it were an after dinner sleep  
Dreaming of both.*

HERE I am, an old man in a dry month,  
Being read to by a boy, waiting for rain.  
I was neither at the hot gates

## GERONTION

Nor fought in the warm rain  
Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass,  
Bitten by flies, fought.  
My house is a decayed house,  
And the jew squats on the window sill, the owner,  
Spawned in some estaminet of Antwerp,  
Blistered in Brussels, patched and peeled in London.  
The goat coughs at night in the field overhead ;  
Rocks, moss, stonecrop, iron, merds.  
The woman keeps the kitchen, makes tea, 10  
Sneezes at evening, poking the peevish gutter.  
I an old man,  
A dull head among windy spaces.

Signs are taken for wonders. " We would see a  
sign ! "  
The word within a word, unable to speak a word,  
Swaddled with darkness. In the juvenescence of the  
year  
Came Christ the tiger

In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut, flowering  
judas,  
To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk  
Among whispers ; by Mr. Silvero 20  
With caressing hands, at Limoges  
Who walked all night in the next room ;

By Hakagawa, bowing among the Titians ;  
By Madame de Tornquist, in the dark room  
Shifting the candles ; Fräulein von Kulp  
Who turned in the hall, one hand on the door.  
Vacant shuttles  
Weave the wind. I have no ghosts,  
An old man in a draughty house  
Under a windy knob.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

After such knowledge, what forgiveness ? Think now  
History has many cunning passages, contrived corridors

And issues, deceives with whispering ambitions,  
Guides us by vanities. Think now  
She gives when our attention is distracted  
And what she gives, gives with such supple confusions  
That the giving famishes the craving. Gives too late  
What's not believed in, or if still believed,  
In memory only, reconsidered passion. Gives too soon

Into weak hands, what's thought can be dispensed  
with 10

Till the refusal propagates a fear. Think  
Neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices  
Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues  
Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes.  
These tears are shaken from the wrath-bearing tree.

The tiger springs in the new year. Us he devours.  
Think at last

We have not reached conclusion, when I  
Stiffen in a rented house. Think at last  
I have not made this show purposelessly  
And it is not by any concitation 20  
Of the backward devils.

I would meet you upon this honestly.  
I that was near your heart was removed therefrom  
To lose beauty in terror, terror in inquisition.  
I have lost my passion : why should I need to keep it  
Since what is kept must be adulterated ?  
I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch :  
How should I use them for your closer contact ?

These with a thousand small deliberations  
Protract the profit of their chilled delirium, 30  
Excite the membrane, when the sense has cooled,

## VIENNA

With pungent sauces, multiply variety  
In a wilderness of mirrors. What will the spider do,  
Suspend its operations, will the weevil  
Delay? De Bailhache, Fresca, Mrs. Cammel, whirled  
Beyond the circuit of the shuddering Bear  
In fractured atoms. Gull against the wind, in the  
windy straits  
Of Belle Isle, or running on the Horn,  
White feathers in the snow, the Gulf claims,  
And an old man driven by the Trades  
To a sleepy corner.

Tenants of the house, 10  
Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season.

T. S. ELIOT

## • VIENNA

THESE are the consequences,  
The way the world goes :  
And sleep's and hope's pretences  
Inadequate defences :  
Too late or ill-planned  
Desperate lines manned :  
Courage and folly now  
To force and craft bow.

Clear air of a mountain town 20  
That I have not known :  
The useless firing and the weary ends  
Of comrades, might-have-been friends,  
Who fought well, but too late.  
Can we, from that fate  
Wring to some foresight,  
Or will the same lost fight  
Mark too our ends ?

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

War is a game for the whole mind,  
An art of will and eye,  
No brothering of mankind  
Or hating inconstantly :  
A hard art of foreseeing,  
Of not too much caring ;  
A game for their playing  
Who fall in love with death,  
Doubt, and seeping fear,  
Contemptuous of the breath  
Of crowds, and love of common  
Yet loved man or woman.  
A giving that retains  
The privacy of our pains.

10

JULIAN BELL

## LOVELY IMMORTAL

DARLING perfection, whom I scorn,  
Lie sleeping, sleeping, softly now !  
In dreamless quiet, there she lies  
Beneath the frosty, starlit bough.

O sleep full softly, never fear ;  
You'll wake and shiver in the grey  
When sun-stars vanish one by one  
And dawn, relentless, strides to day.

20

O then your thought will rise and wrench  
The world anew, renew the past,  
Give alien life to bird and leaf  
Till day with grief is overcast.

In one sharp moment you'll repeat  
The words too true. You'll not rescind,

## O TIME BE SWIFT

But whistle, whistle, once again  
For dreams gone sailing down the wind.

And still at daybreak, sunset, noon,  
You'll turn and leave a wreath to lie  
Where I have found my bivouac  
Under a black and broken sky.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## WHEN I'M ALONE

"*WHEN I'm alone*"—The words tripped off his tongue  
As though to be alone were nothing strange.  
"*When I was young*," he said, "*when I was young. . . .*"

I thought of age, and loneliness, and change. 10  
I thought how strange we grow when we're alone,  
And how unlike the selves that meet, and talk,  
And blow the candles out, and say good-night.  
*Alone. . . .* The word is life endured and known.  
It is the stillness where our spirits walk  
And all but inmost faith is overthrown.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

## O TIME BE SWIFT

O TIME be swift to heal this sullen pain,  
Make me forgetful as the rivers are  
Of the moon's image when the dawn again  
Drives from the sky all save the morning star ; 20  
Let me keep nothing of my lost delight,  
Not so much as a scent to chill my room



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

With bitter-sweet remembrance ; fill the night  
With kind oblivious sleep and soundless gloom.

So in a little while may I awaken  
To the bright world and live, being wise to bless  
The sun because it lights the road I have taken,  
My life because it has conquered bitterness,  
My soul because I have held my faith unshaken,  
My hope because it was strengthened by distress.

EDWARD DAVISON

### LIVE YOU BY LOVE CONFINED

LIVE you by love confined,  
There is no nearer nearness ;  
Break not his light bounds,  
The stars' and seas' harness :  
There is nothing beyond,  
We have found the land's end.  
We'll take no mortal wound  
Who felt him in the furnace,  
Drowned in his fierceness,  
By his midsummer browned :  
Nor ever lose awareness  
Of nearness and farness  
Who've stood at earth's heart careless  
Of suns and storms around,  
Who have leant on the hedge of the wind,  
On the last ledge of darkness.

We are where love has come  
To live : he is that river  
Which flows and is the same ;  
He is not the famous deceiver  
Nor early-flowering dream.  
Content you. Be at home  
In me. There's but one room

## IF LOVE BE A FLOWER

Of all the house you may never  
Share, deny or enter.  
There, as a candle's beam  
Stands firm and will not waver  
Spire-straight in a close chamber,  
As though in shadowy cave a  
Stalagmite of flame,  
The integral spirit climbs  
The dark in light for ever.

C. DAY LEWIS

## IF LOVE BE A FLOWER

If love be a flower, 10  
Pluck not thy flower,  
Though flowers be cool  
And dear to thy brow.  
Thou happy fool,  
Thou shalt travel not far,  
Thou shalt lie down with this  
Cold flower for thy lover.  
He shall blind, he shall star  
Thine eyes. His cold kiss  
Thy mouth shall cover. 20

If love be music,  
Hear not that music,  
Sing not that song,  
Though songs be few.  
Oh, very strong,  
Very close is the weaving  
Of notes among notes.  
Thou art bound and entangled.  
Sing, then, unbelieving,  
And sing till thy throat's  
Soft song is strangled. 30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

If love be a lion,  
Flee not that lion,  
Let thy triumphing bones  
On the desert lie.  
On a desert of stones  
Thy bones shall smile,  
Comforted only  
By stark silence.  
Silence and dew  
Be thy crown, for thou  
Wert blind to a flower  
And deaf to music.

10

STELLA BENSON

## LOVE

BESIDE love, what jewel has mystery  
And depth of heart ?  
What bird of the wood has sanctuary  
In leaves apart ?  
What ewe calling her lamb at evening  
Has tenderness ?  
What day has grace that night can deepen  
And sleep can bless ?

20

Jewel filled with water-light  
Strong to endure,  
Bird in the dark green night  
Of leaves pure,  
Ewe and lamb side by side,  
Evening above,  
No strength, no peace, no comfort have  
Beside love.

STELLA GIBBONS

## THE CUL-DE-SAC

### SONG

Love, Love to-day, my dear,  
Love is not always here ;  
Wise maids know how soon grows sere  
The greenest leaf of Spring ;  
But no man knoweth  
Whither it goeth  
When the wind bloweth  
So frail a thing.

Love, Love, my dear, to-day,  
If the ship's in the bay,  
If the bird has come your way  
That sings on summer trees ;  
When his song faileth  
And the ship saileth  
No voice availeth  
To call back these.

10

CHARLOTTE MEW

## THE CUL-DE-SAC

WHOSE love's a broad highway  
That stretches boldly on  
Before them all the day,  
White and smooth in the sun—  
These, if they will, may run.  
For them there is no need  
To curb the hot-foot speed  
Of their delight, which draws them  
On over dale and hill  
And from each summit shows them  
A landscape lovelier still.

20

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

But those whose love's no more  
Than a blind alley—  
A cul-de-sac  
Which can have no other end  
Than turning back  
Or beating with bare hands  
At a wall without a door—  
These must go slowly.  
These at a measured pace  
Must walk, 10  
And linger in one place  
Often, to gaze and talk ;  
Even retrace  
A yard or two, perhaps,  
Their careful steps,  
And take them over again.  
Their eyes they must restrain  
From seeking the far sky  
And bend them to enjoy  
The small delights which grow beneath their feet :  
Veined, shining, curious pebbles 21  
They must admire, and stoop  
To finger the small cresses,  
Stonecrops and cushioned mosses  
That creep  
Between the untrodden cobbles  
Of that deserted street.

Gently if they are wise,  
From stage to stage progresses  
The grave, time-honoured dance of their caresses.  
Impetuous hands must bide 31  
Their hour, till hungry eyes  
Be satisfied ;  
And from a finger's touch  
They must distil as much  
Sweetness and ravishment

## SILVER WEDDING

As freer lovers find  
In bodies intertwined.  
They must eke out each kiss  
With its own memory  
And long foretasting of the next one's bliss :  
For kisses treated so  
Shall be less swift to grow  
(Strange alchemy !) from butterfly to bee.

By such fond strategy,  
Such passionate artifice, 10  
They may a long while cheat  
Themselves into content,  
And not too deeply care  
That fate across the threshold of their street  
Has scrawled " No Thoroughfare."

JAN STRUTHER

## HUSBAND AND WIFE

Not theirs the vain tumultuous bliss,  
Whose only currency's a kiss,  
Nor linkèd hands, nor meeting eyes,  
But long-drawn mutual silences, 20  
Community in trivial things,  
The rare fantastic mood that brings  
Wisdom and mirth unspeakable  
Out of an insect or a shell.

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

## SILVER WEDDING

In the middle of the night he started up  
At a cry from his sleeping Bride,  
A bat from some ruin in a heart he'd never searched,  
Nay, hardly seen inside :

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

“ Want me and take me for the woman that I am,  
And not for her that died,  
The lovely chit Nineteen I one time was,  
And am no more,” she cried.

RALPH HODGSON

### WOMAN'S SONG

No more upon my bosom rest thee,  
Too often have my hands caressed thee,  
My lips thou knowest well, too well.  
Lean to my heart no more thine ear  
My spirit's hidden truth to hear  
—It has no more to tell.

10

In what dark night, in what strange night,  
Burnt to the butt the candle's light  
That lit our room so long ?  
I do not know. I thought I knew  
How love could be both sweet and true,  
I also thought it strong.

Where has the flame departed, where  
Amid the waste of empty air  
Is that which dwelt with us ?  
Was it a fancy ? Did we make  
Only a show for dead love's sake,  
It being so piteous ?

20

No more against my bosom press thee,  
Ask no more that my hands caress thee,  
Leave the sad lips thou hast known so well.  
If to my heart thou lean thine ear,  
There, grieving, thou wilt only hear  
Vain murmuring of an empty shell.

EDWARD SHANKS



## LOVE LIGHTS HIS FIRE

### SONG OF OPHELIA THE SURVIVOR

THERE is no smirch of sin in you, only its fires.  
You are a man burned white with merciless desires ;  
A restless heat consumes you, and your brain,  
Tortured to torturing, craves for ugly pain.

Beauty still lives in you, and from her seat  
Controls your glances, and directs your feet ;  
One look from you taught me so much of love,  
I have all pleasure, just to watch you move.

That look was like a wet blue mist of flowers,  
Which held compelling loveliness and sleepy powers.  
I dreamed of calling pipes down a warm glade ; 11  
By the transposed music of your soul I was betrayed.

Pipe for me, my dear lover ! I will come,  
And your sick soul shall find in me a home ;  
I will be your house, clean, high, and strong,  
And you shall live in me, all winter long.

As you are fevered, I will be a pool,  
Full of green shadows, level, silent, cool.  
You shall bathe in me, in my being move ;  
I will put out your fires with my strong love. 20

ANNA WICKHAM

## LOVE LIGHTS HIS FIRE

Love lights his fire to burn my Past—  
There goes the house where I was born !  
And even Friendship—Love declares—  
Must feed his precious flames and burn.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

I stuffed my life with odds and ends,  
But how much joy can Knowledge give ?  
The World my guide, I lived to learn—  
From Love, alone, I learn to live.

W. H. DAVIES

### THE WHITE SWAN

COULD you but see her  
—She would seem  
Like some bright star  
That is seen in dream :  
Like a sun-burst  
Seen on a wintry day  
When all, but one bright spot,  
Is grey.

10

Could you but see her  
—That would be  
As when one sees  
On a flooding sea  
The white foam ride ;  
Or sees a proud swan,  
Buoyantly,  
Breasting a tide.

20

JAMES STEPHENS

### SECOND PORTRAIT OF J. M.

SHE has stood upon the rims of many worlds  
And looked at many voids with open eyes  
And turned back smiling and returned unscathed,  
Remaining young and wise.

## INTIMACY

She has drunk the sun, embraced the air, spun Earth  
Upon her fingertips, and laughed and cried  
A lifetime in a day, but never yet  
Been wholly satisfied.

She is armoured, confident, complete, exultant,  
Born to command, star-destined to success—  
And yet, a little, longs to rest, disarmed,  
Tired of tirelessness.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

## TO — WITH AN IVORY HAND-GLASS

Look in this crystal pool, and you will see  
(Haloed in gold, enshrined in ivory) 10  
What Heaven's unopened windows hid from me.

Whence this enchantment, weaving spells that bind  
With sightless cords my visionary mind?  
What angel, dark or shining, lurks behind?

Eyes of the flesh still blind, unfolded scroll  
Hiding its mystery! God knows the whole.  
I guess your face the shadow of your soul.

ALFRED DOUGLAS

## INTIMACY

SINCE I have seen you do those intimate things  
That other men but dream off; lull asleep  
The sinister dark forest of your hair 20  
And tie the bows that stir on your calm breast  
Faintly as leaves that shudder in their sleep.  
Since I have seen your stocking swallow up,  
A swift black wind, the flame of your pale foot,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And deemed your slender limbs so meshed in silk  
Sweet mermaid sisters drowned in their dark hair ;  
I have not troubled overmuch with food,  
And wine has seemed like water from a well ;  
Pavements are built of fire, grass of thin flames ;  
All other girls grow dull as painted flowers,  
Or flutter harmlessly like coloured flies  
Whose wings are tangled in the net of leaves  
Spread by frail trees that grow behind the eyes.

EDGELL RICKWORD

## THE WINDS

THE quality of your rage is my delight : 10  
I saw a wind in a volcanic night  
Incline a fir-wood almost to the ground,  
And with such strength, that I could hear no sound—  
So is your anger written for my mind,  
In driven trees, and in that mastering wind.

A quality of courage is my gift.  
First would you wreck, O Builder ? Lift  
Your hammer against me, and strike your fill ;  
Cleave me to dust—and from that dust my will  
Will rise in spirals, masterful as flame, 20  
Till whirlwinds march, in triumphs of your name !

ANNA WICKHAM

## RENASCENCE

WE have bit no forbidden apple,  
Eve and I,  
Yet the splashes of day and night  
Falling round us, no longer dapple  
The same valley with purple and white.

## RENASCENCE

This is our own still valley,  
Our Eden, our home ;  
But day shows it vivid with feeling,  
And the pallor of night does not tally  
With dark sleep that once covered the ceiling.

The little red heifer : to-night I looked in her eyes ;  
She will calve to-morrow.  
Last night, when I went with the lantern, the sow  
was grabbing her litter  
With snarling red jaws ; and I heard the cries  
Of the new-born, and then, the old owl, then the bats  
that flutter. 10

And I woke to the sound of the wood-pigeon, and lay  
and listened  
Till I could borrow  
A few quick beats from a wood-pigeon's heart ; and  
when I did rise  
Saw where morning sun on the shaken iris glistened.  
And I knew that home, this valley, was wider than  
Paradise.

I learned it all from my Eve,  
The warm dumb wisdom ;  
She's a quicker instructress than years ;  
She has quickened my pulse to receive  
Strange throbs, beyond laughter and tears. 20

So now I know the valley  
Fleshed all like me  
With feelings that change and quiver  
And clash, and yet seem to tally,  
Like all the clash of a river  
Moves on to the sea.

D. H. LAWRENCE

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### OMNIPRESENCE

THERE is no loneliness for me ;  
I see you in the dotted stars,  
in all the plenty of the leafless sea :  
even the rush-hid nenuphars  
suggest your personality ;  
you forage with the pirate bee.

How wonderful that you should share  
with Earth her time-old loveliness !  
Does she not lend her softness for your hair,  
and can no other way express 10  
what thrushes down the years have sung  
but through the sweetness of your tongue ?

You descant with the droning bees,  
and when the sky-lark's hymns are done  
I hear strange echoes drop among the trees :  
I pluck the crimson snap-dragon  
and feel you shiver through and through,  
for spirit has gone out of you.

CHRISTOPHER HASSALL

### FISH IN THE UNRUFFLED LAKES

FISH in the unruffled lakes  
The swarming colours wear, 20  
Swans in the winter air  
A white perfection have,  
And the great lion walks  
Through his innocent grove ;  
Lion, fish, and swan  
Act, and are gone  
Upon Time's toppling wave.

## SONG

We till shadowed days are done,  
We must weep and sing  
Duty's conscious wrong,  
The Devil in the clock,  
The Goodness carefully worn  
For atonement or for luck ;  
We must lose our loves,  
On each beast and bird that moves  
Turn an envious look.

Sighs for folly said and done  
Twist our narrow days ;  
But I must bless, I must praise  
That you, my swan, who have  
All gifts that to the swan  
Impulsive Nature gave,  
The majesty and pride,  
Last night should add  
Your voluntary love.

10

W. H. AUDEN

## SONG

SINCE I have given thee all my very heart,  
Since I have staked so deep and dangerously  
All that I have of hope till breath depart,  
And flung my little kingdom on a die ;

20

Since now there streams over my land and sea  
This dread Love—strange as light—beyond recall,  
I am thy prisoner ; yes, and thou art free  
With but a touch to lay in ruin all.

HERBERT TRENCH



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### A HERD OF DOES

THERE is no doe in all the herd  
Whose heart is not her heart.  
O Earth, with all their glimmering eyes  
She sees thee as thou art.

Like them in shapes of fleeting fire  
She mingles with the light  
Till whoso saw her sees her not  
And doubts his former sight.

They come and go and none can say  
Who sees them subtly run  
If they indeed are forms of life  
Or figments of the sun.

10

So is she one with Heaven here,  
Confounding mortal eyes,  
As do the holy dead who move  
Innumerable in the skies.

But now and then a wandering man  
May glimpse as on he goes  
A golden movement of her dreams  
As 'twere a herd of does.

20

HUGH MACDIARMID

### ON HARTING DOWN

ONCE, when their hearts were wild with joy,  
They bedded on the downs :  
Hours drifted past, the dawn grew ghast,  
Their polls wore dewy crowns.

## LODGE AND MANSION

While the stars paled, she, first, awoke  
And saw, no more alone,  
They kernel were to a herd of deer,  
Come round them all unknown.

A dun buck couched upon the left,  
A white doe to their right,  
An hundred others, like watching mothers,  
Loomed peacefully out of night.

Ere she could wake him, they rose and were  
    shaking  
Small droplets from cold thighs ;  
Proudly the leader then streamed them afar  
To where the sun would rise.

10

Till, dot by dot, they threaded the arch  
His lifting forehead raised,  
And, sublimed to light, were lost to sight,  
Though still enthralled she gazed.

Her lover rose and, leaning close,  
Through to her mind he peered ;  
Parked therein, numerous, timid, dumb  
Musings retired or neared.

20

T. STURGE MOORE

## LODGE AND MANSION

WHEN you have left me, beautiful, alone,  
This tireless soul and tired thing of breath,  
Again toward two houses I must run  
And always be encroaching fast upon  
Your beauty and the hour of my death.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

How little, in your loving if I died  
Kissed into silence, should I want of faith !  
But like an artless bridegroom and a bride  
Never my resolutions coincide—  
Your beauty and the hour of my death.

O then some darkness when delight is due  
Conceal in your rare lips a painless wraith  
Of poison to consume my body too,  
That I may drink, while all the world is you,  
Your beauty and the hour of my death. 10

Then under holy arms what could we fear ?  
We would not fear, to do no more with breath.  
It was the curious dawn we could not bear  
That looked into the night—O take, my dear,  
Your hour and the beauty of my death.  
LAURENCE WHISTLER

## AFTER ATTEMPTED ESCAPE FROM LOVE

(To J. M.)

He who has once been caught in a silver chain  
may burn and toss and fret.  
He will never be bound with bronze again ;  
he will not be forgiven ; will never forget.  
He who has looked at the golden grapes of the sun  
will call no sour fruit sweet. 21  
He will turn from the moon's green apples and run,  
though they fall in his hand, though they lie at his  
feet.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

## THE BAD GIRL

### FREEDOM

Now heaven be thanked, I am out of love again !

I have been long a slave, and now am free ;

I have been tortured, and am eased of pain ;

I have been blind, and now my eyes can see ;

I have been lost, and now the way lies plain ;

I have been caged, and now I hold the key ;

I have been mad, and now at last am sane ;

I am wholly I, that was but a half of me.

So, a free man, my dull proud path I plod,

Who, tortured, blind, mad, caged, was once a God.

JAN STRUTHER

## THE BAD GIRL

I saw her in her woodland place

11

When she was young, when we were young :

And there was fairness in her face

And a sweet verse upon her tongue.

The last red light made glancing ore

The mosses on the knotty tree :

The level rays in the covert's core

Made all the leafage fantasy ;

Made the brown gold, and made her seem

(Who was, God knows, but common clay)

20

A noble thing, a lovely theme,

One that could not be cast away.

I cast away, I cast away

Things childish, and am not forlorn :

But she had better have died, the day

She stood so fair beneath the thorn.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Younger than I, yet is she old ;  
None finds her honest, none finds her sweet :  
Long past her beauty, she will scold,  
Will beg and cozen, lie and cheat.

I as the woody medlar grow  
And shall be ripe when I am rotten :  
But like June's strawberry, even so  
She, much enjoyed, is soon forgotten.

Yet like Ben Jonson's lily, she  
Lent to her day a darling grace, 10  
Remembered till unwept shall be  
Laid in the loam her liliated face.

So, Saturn, upon Venus think,  
And light esteem your armour tough :  
Say, though the festering lily stink,  
Strength without beauty's not enough.

RUTH PITTER

## WELL, AND WHAT OF IT ?

WELL, and what of it ? What if you are beautiful ?  
What if your ready mirror shows you hour by hour  
far eyes profound as a heaven-reflecting pool,  
mouth like the rainbow's smile upon the summer  
shower ? 20

What if your faithful thirsty lovers think of you  
as of some draught celestial, some pure passion's wine,  
when still the man-made Grail of their adoring view  
flows but with vanity, ferment of worldly vine ?

Is this achievement ? Is this what shall make you  
glad ?

Is this a gift for others bought with your life-blood,

## NOW I HAVE NOTHING

a sweet truth that shall warm men's starving hearts  
shall add  
to weal, this cold, corroding misuse of rich good ?

Out on you, woman ; quit your beauty, ere the day  
when that's within it shall have eat'n it all away.

ELIZABETH DARYUSH

## FALSE ANCHORAGE

UNDER this hayrick lies  
All my heart's treasure.  
The impermanent skies  
Pass at their leisure,  
And the flowers of the noon  
Prepare to fade soon,  
The bird-music dies,  
Oh bitter heart's treasure,  
To anchor me so  
To this woman, my lover,  
While the skies fade above her  
And the earth dies below.

10

RICHARD CHURCH

## NOW I HAVE NOTHING

Now I have nothing. Even the joy of loss—  
Even the dreams I had I now am losing.  
Only this thing I know ; that you are using  
My heart as a stone to bear your foot across. . . . 20  
I am glad — I am glad — the stone is of your  
choosing. . . .

STELLA BENSON

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### MARY'S SONG

I WAD ha'e gi'en him my lips tae kiss,  
Had I been his, had I been his ;  
Barley breid and elder wine,  
Had I been his as he is mine.

The wanderin' bee it seeks the rose ;  
Tae the lochan's bosom the burnie goes ;  
The grey bird cries at evenin's fa',  
" My luve, my fair one, come awa'."

My beloved sall ha'e this he'rt tae break,  
Reid, reid wine and the barley cake, 10  
A he'rt tae break, and a mou' tae kiss,  
Tho' he be nae mine, as I am his.

MARION ANGUS

### GOSSIP

A BREEZE in the barley  
And gossip is there ;  
A thousand heads whispering  
A secret laid bare.

A thousand wise heads  
A-nod in the sun ;  
The joy on their faces !  
The shame on one ! 20

JOHN GAWSWORTH

### WHEESHT, WHEESHT

WHEESHT, wheesht, my foolish hert,  
For weel ye ken  
I widna ha'e ye stert  
Auld ploys again.



## SEA LOVE

It's guid to see her lie  
Sae snod an' cool,  
A' lust o' lovin' by—  
*Wheesht, wheesht, ye fule.*

HUGH MACDIARMID

## MORNING

A WIDE land and a bright light flowing  
Where winds nor rise nor fall ;  
Empty ; and not a footstep going  
To break the charm at all.

A wide sky and a deep calm, knowing  
Of neither right nor wrong—  
Only through all material flowing  
Soft immaterial song.

10

The loud hoof of a strong horse going ;  
Grinding of wheel on road ;  
And the heart awakened, and bitterly knowing  
Its harness and its load.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

## SEA LOVE

TIDE be runnin' the great world over :

'Twas only last June month I mind that we  
Was thinkin' the toss and the call in the breast of  
the lover

So everlastin' as the sea.

20

Heer's the same little fishes that sputter and swim,

Wi' the moon's old glim on the grey, wet sand ;

An' him's no more to me nor me to him

Than the wind goin' over my hand.

CHARLOTTE MEW

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### SO NOW SEPTEMBER ENDS

So now September ends ; above the sea  
One drifting gull emits his plaintive cry,  
Haunting, and keeping lonely watch with me,  
Wheeling above the shadows from the sky.  
Ours is a harmony of solitude,  
Ours the soul-union, gotten without speech,  
That shares and understands the heart's wild mood  
When love has turned to jetsam of the beach :  
For I am gone from you, am desolate.  
He is bereft : his flock has winged away. 10  
We are sad monarchs of a tide-bound state,  
Without one subject in this dying day ;  
And ever on my ears (O serpent hiss !)  
Surf brushes shingle with a lover's kiss.

JOHN GAWSWORTH

### BITTER SANCTUARY

#### I

SHE lives in the porter's room ; the plush is nicotined.  
Clients have left their photos there to perish.  
She watches through green shutters those who press  
To reach unconsciousness.  
She licks her varnished thin magenta lips,  
She picks her foretooth with a finger nail, 20  
She pokes her head out to greet new clients, or  
To leave them (to what torture) waiting at the door.

#### II

Heat has locked the heavy earth,  
Given strength to every sound.  
He, where his life still holds him to the ground,

## BITTER SANCTUARY

In anaesthesia, groaning for re-birth,  
Leans at the door.  
From out the house there comes the dullest flutter ;  
A lackey ; and thin giggling from behind that shutter.

### III

His lost eyes lean to find the number.  
Follows his knuckled rap, and hesitating curse.  
He cannot wake himself ; he may not slumber ;  
While on the long white wall across the road  
Drives the thin outline of a dwindling hearse.

### IV

Now the door opens wide. 10

*He* : " Is there room inside ? "

*She* : " Are you past the bounds of pain ? "

*He* : " May my body lie in vain  
Among the dreams I cannot keep ! "

*She* : " Let him drink the cup of sleep."

### V

Thin arms and ghostly hands ; faint sky-blue eyes ;  
Long drooping lashes, lids like full-blown moons,  
Clinging to any brink of floating skies :  
What hope is there ? What fear ?—Unless to wake  
and see  
Lingering flesh, or cold eternity. 20

O yet some face, half living, brings  
Far gaze to him and croons :

*She* : " You're white. You are alone.

Can you not approach my sphere ? "

*He* : " I'm changing into stone."

*She* : " Would I were ! Would I were ! "

Then the white attendants fill the cup.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### VI

In the morning through the world,  
Watch the flunkeys bring the coffee ;  
Watch the shepherds on the downs,  
Lords and ladies at their toilet,  
Farmers, merchants, frothing towns.

But look how he, unfortunate, now fumbles  
Through unknown chambers, unheedful stumbles.  
Can he evade the over-shadowing night ?  
Are there not somewhere chinks of braided light ?

### VII

How do they leave who once are in those rooms ? 10  
Some may be found, they say, deeply asleep  
In ruined tombs.  
Some in white beds, with faces round them. Some  
Wander the world, and never find a home.

HAROLD MONRO

## THE PLAYERS

To-DAY I acted Christ,  
While Joy played Lazarus ;  
I buried her in ferns  
And heaps of gathered grass.  
And when I cried " Come forth ! " 20  
Up from the grave she rose  
And, with a peal of bells,  
Threw off her burial clothes.

When Sleep this night has come,  
With feathers for our grass,  
Shall we reverse our parts  
Of Christ and Lazarus ?

## THE REAPER

When I—a buried man—  
Hear “Lazarus, come forth !”  
I’ll rise and with both hands  
Ring every bell on earth !

W. H. DAVIES

## HOW LONG, SAID SPIRIT, MUST I WALK THIS EARTH ?

How long, said spirit, must I walk this earth ?  
I, wingèd, to whom Paradise gave birth,  
How long must I pace fields of drought and dearth ?

How long, said mind, must I tread the small maze  
Of paths bewild’ring, of thought that betrays  
My straight endeavour with blind-alleyed ways ? 10

How long must I, said life, said bodied soul,  
Be baulked by faulty flesh from beauty’s goal ?  
How long have but pittance, who sees joy’s whole ?

How long, said heart, may I love’s raiment wear ?  
How long may I work for those I hold dear ?  
When must I leave them in sorrow and fear ?

ELIZABETH DARYUSH

## THE REAPER

I saw in a corn-field  
A man very beautiful ;  
And he held in his hand  
A sickle of flame.  
I approached him and said, “ Sir,  
Why standest thou sorrowful  
Here by thyself, and  
What is thy name ? ”

20

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Then sadly he answered :  
“ My name, it is Wonderful,  
Lord of the Harvest, and  
Healer of ill.  
My spirit is sore grieved,  
For the time is at hand  
To put forth the sickle :  
And lo !  
The corn is a bundle,  
The chaff is a hill.”

10

MICHAEL MCKENNA

## SONNET

DARK dreadful death I dread your approach :  
Knowing as I know you roll nearer every hour  
Fear of your fearful embrace spreads great folds  
Of coldness like an ocean over me ; I cry, How  
How can I withstand, stand up, repel  
The ever invading eternal wave whose swell  
Beginning at birth, declines into what afterwards,  
Reaching its crested height at the second the heart  
Sick of resistance, sinks to succumb like a stone  
Marking the moment buoyant life departed.  
Not beaten, not beaten, but utterly fatigued  
These four limbs fall deaf to the word defeat :  
Aware by divine kindness that this descent  
Through cubic nothingness resembles supine rest.

20

GEORGE BARKER

## FATE WRITES TWO EPITAPHS

### I. ON ANY MAN

I LET him find, but never what he sought ;  
I let him act, but never as he meant ;

## EPITAPHS

And, after much mislearning, he was taught,  
Tired, to be content with discontent.

### 2. ON MAN

He had great virtues, but a seed of terror  
Corrupted him ; fear made him cruel, mean ;  
So I repealed an all-but-glorious error,  
Wiped off a little dust, and left earth clean.

A. S. J. TESSIMOND

## EPITAPHS

### I

#### THE SLAYERS

" WHY did you die ? "—I died of everything :  
Life, like deep water, robbed me of my breath ;  
Sorrow, delight, love, music, Winter, Spring,  
Slew me in turn, and, last of all, came—Death. 10

### II

#### FOR A BLIND MAN

On many a road, forlorn,  
I wandered day and night.  
For *this* then was I born—  
To find in death my light ?

### III

#### THIRST

Life did not stint my cup to fill,  
I drank each drop yet thirsted still ;  
Death's little, poor and meagre wine  
Has wholly quenched this thirst of mine.



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### IV

#### EVERYMAN

What shall be said of me? "He lived a span—  
Then died." No more! What more of any man?

### V

#### THE AMBUSH

Year in, year out, I took my daily pleasure  
In ways serene beyond the common measure,  
So was the more surprised when, suddenly,  
Death (whom I scarce believed in) sprang on me.

### VI

#### GREEN FRUIT

O! rose-red blossom, shake your wings and fall  
From the safe shelter of the sunny wall!  
Your fruit? Lament it not. It might have been  
Like mine (which came to ripeness), sour and green.

### VII

#### THE RETURN

Disown me not, O patient Mother Earth!  
Restless was I, a rebel from my birth;  
But now thy prodigal and weary son  
Seeks pardon at thy breast, his folly done.

II

### VIII

#### PROPHECY

My light is out, yet will I prophesy  
Men still unborn will show more light than I;  
And am content that other men in turn  
Against *my* darkness shall the brighter burn.

MARGARET SACKVILLE

## EPITAPH

### THIS, OUR SISTER

SHIP with brass handles, crowned with flowers,  
That rides the chancel high,  
The candle-light, the incense cloud,  
The storm of music pass thee by :

Above the arches and the voice,  
The chanting and the mourners pale,  
O mute and folded voyager,  
What ocean dost thou sail ?

L. A. G. STRONG

## EPITAPH

SHE was too lovely for remembrance—  
Let us forget her like a dream, 10  
Lest all our days and all our nights hereafter  
Empty should seem.

Let not the blind remember beauty,  
Nor deaf men think upon a tune :  
There are things that are too lovely for remem-  
brance—  
Let us forget her soon.

Let us forget her—we who loved her—  
For pity's sake, for comfort's sake :  
Lest, plucked too oft by the long hands of sorrow,  
Our heart-strings break. 20

JAN STRUTHER

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

## ISLAND ROSE

SHE has given all her beauty to the water ;  
 She has told her secrets to the tidal bell ;  
 And her hair is a moon-drawn net, and it has  
     caught her,  
 And her voice is in the hollow shell.

She will not come back now any more, nor waken  
Out of her island dream where no wind blows ;  
And only in the small house of the shell, forsaken,  
Sings the dark one whose face is a rose.

**HAMISH MACLAREN**

## SKALD'S DEATH

I HAVE known all the storms that roll.  
I have been a singer after the fashion  
Of my people—a poet of passion.  
All that is past.  
Quiet has come into my soul.  
Life's tempest is done.  
I lie at last  
A bird cliff under the midnight sun.

HUGH MACDIARMID

## FROST

UNNATURAL foliage pales the trees ;  
Frost, in compassion of their death,  
Has kissed them, and his icy breath  
Proclaims and silvers their election. 20  
Death, wert thou beautiful as these,  
We scarce would pray for resurrection.

L. A. G. STRONG

## IN THIS DARK HOUSE

### IN THIS DARK HOUSE

I SHALL come back to die  
From a far place at last,  
After my life's carouse  
In the old bed to lie  
Remembering the past  
In this dark house.

Because of a clock's chime  
In the long waste of night,  
I shall awake and wait  
At that calm, lonely time  
Each sound and smell and sight  
Mysterious and innate—

10

Some shadow on the wall  
When curtains by the door  
Move in a draught of wind ;  
Or else a light footfall  
In a near corridor ;  
Even to feel the kind  
Caress of a cool hand  
Smoothing the draggled hair  
Back from my shrunken brow,  
And strive to understand  
The woman's presence there,  
And whence she came; and how.

20

What gust of wind that night  
Will mutter her lost name  
Through windows open wide,  
And twist the flickering light  
Of a sole candle's flame  
Smoking from side to side,

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Till the last spark it blows  
Sets a moth's wings aflame  
As the faint flame goes out ?

Some distant door may close ;  
Perhaps a heavy chair  
On bare floors dragged about  
O'er the low ceiling sound,  
And the thin twig of a tree  
Knock on my window-pane  
Till all the night around  
Is listening with me,  
While like a noise of rain  
Leaves rustle in the wind.

10

Then from the inner gloom  
The scratching of a mouse  
May echo down my mind  
And sound around the room  
In this dark house.

The vague scent of a flower  
Smelt then in that warm air  
From gardens drifting in,  
May slowly overpower  
The vapid lavender,  
Till feebly I begin  
To count the scents I knew  
And name them one by one,  
And search the names for this.

20

Dreams will be swift and few  
Ere that last night be done,  
And gradual silences  
In each long interim  
Of halting time awake  
All conscious sense confuse :

30

## LET ME NOT LIVE

Shadows will grow more dim,  
And sound and scent forsake  
The dark, ere dawn ensues.

In the new morning then,  
So fixed the stare and fast,  
The calm unseeing eye  
Will never close again.

I shall come back at last,  
In this dark house to die.

EDWARD DAVISON

## THE SLEEPER

He has rejected the dumb word 10  
Of stone, or of stilled woods,  
The melancholy of moorland bird  
And the clashing bells of floods.

He has forgotten the calling sky  
And the tolling of the sea.  
Too memorable Earth, may I  
Sleep just as sound as he.

LILIAN BOWES LYON

## LET ME NOT LIVE

Let me not live in a sad monument,  
But let me be  
Far from the searching of remembrance sent, 20  
Sunk in the sea ;  
The Gods have written death ; set not to time  
The trifling bound

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Of marble, nor a tablet marred with rhyme,  
No plot of ground ;  
I was less fair than clouds, and no man makes  
Statues to these ;  
Forget me ; think upon the silent lakes,  
The slender trees.

RUTH PITTER

### FROST

AH, nobody knows  
The thing I would learn  
But the star of the frost  
That is still in the night for a while 10  
And is burned in the morning and lost.

So would I be frozen,  
So would I be burned  
Into silence  
And lost ;  
So would I return—  
Not I—not I—  
But a wind from the wild,  
Besieging the blossoming  
Towers of the roses. 20

STELLA BENSON

### HE WILL WATCH THE HAWK

He will watch the hawk with an indifferent eye  
Or pitifully ;  
Nor on those eagles that so feared him, now  
Will strain his brow ;  
Weapons men use, stone, sling and strong-thewed bow  
He will not know.



## PADRAIC O'CONAIRE—GAELIC STORY-TELLER

This aristocrat, superb of all instinct,  
With death close linked  
Had paced the enormous cloud, almost had won  
War on the sun ;  
Till now, like Icarus mid-ocean-drowned,  
Hands, wings, are found.

STEPHEN SPENDER

### THE DEAD POET

WHEN rime was on the road and ditches glistened  
Under the leafless trees before the hedge,  
The birds upon the boughs perked heads and listened  
To the tight ice cracking amid the sedge, 10  
And over the old bridge you came a-whistling,  
Puffing your breath out, steaming the air around,  
And I thought, " Never scytheman went a-thistling  
That cut his purple clean as you cut sound."

Your notes re-echo on a frosty morning :  
I never see the sun's bar top a hill,  
The ice-plumed pine with dripping fire adorning,  
But once again I hear their lusty, shrill,  
Clear music, and expect to see you come :  
I cannot think, " He has turned, and made for home."  
JOHN GAWSWORTH

## PADRAIC O'CONAIRE—GAELIC STORY-TELLER

(DIED IN THE FALL OF 1928)

THEY'VE paid the last respects in sad tobacco 21  
And silent is this wakehouse in its haze ;  
They've paid their last respects ; and now their  
whiskey  
Flings laughing words on mouths of prayer and praise ;

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And so young couples huddle by the gables,  
O let them grope home through the hedgy night—  
Alone I'll mourn my old friend, while the cold dawn  
Thins out the holy candlelight.

Respects are paid to one loved by the people ;  
Ah, was he not—among our mighty poor—  
The sudden wealth cast on those pools of darkness,  
Those bearing, just, a star's faint signature ;  
And so he was to me, close friend, near brother,  
Dear Padraic of the wild and sea-cold eyes— 10  
So loveable, so courteous and noble,  
The very West was in his soft replies.

They'll miss his heavy stick and stride in Wicklow—  
His story-talking down Winetavern Street,  
Where old men sitting in the wizen daylight  
Have kept an edge upon his gentle wit ;  
While women on the grassy streets of Galway,  
Who hearken for his passing—but in vain,  
Shall hardly tell his step as shadows vanish  
Through archways of forgotten Spain. 20

Ah, they'll say : Padraic's gone again exploring ;  
But now down glens of brightness, O he'll find  
An alehouse overflowing with wise Gaelic  
That's braced in vigour by the bardic mind,  
And there his thoughts shall find their own fore-  
fathers—  
In minds to whom our heights of race belong,  
In crafty men, who ribbed a ship or turned  
The secret joinery of song.

Alas, death mars the parchment of his forehead ;  
And yet for him, I know, the earth is mild— 30  
The windy fidgets of September grasses  
Can never tease a mind that loved the wild ;

## AS THOUGH WITH THE EYES OF A POET

So drink his peace—this grey juice of the barley  
Runs with a light that ever pleased his eye—  
While old flames nod and gossip on the hearthstone  
And only the young winds cry.

F. R. HIGGINS

## AS THOUGH WITH THE EYES OF A POET DEAD AND GONE

As though with the eyes of a poet dead and gone  
I loitered looking on  
Where scattered over the turnip field a score  
Of workers, each in the hoar  
Dusk of winter secluded as working alone,  
Lifted the roots full-grown. 10  
Vagrant seemed they and mum as a flock of crows,  
And when with heavy blows  
They swung the roots together to free them of soil  
This gesture of their toil  
Was as though they would flap their wings with the  
first smite  
And struggle of taking flight.

Small was their winter world, where looming a tree  
Signalled its boundary,  
And the lost sun groping its way through the west  
Might have sunk unguessed, 20  
Save that from the rickyard the breathing blur  
Of the thrasher awhirr  
Betokened that longer yet the dim day must run  
Before their day's work were done.

Not as myself I watched them—with alien sense  
And curious deference  
Of one but lot and luck as a bird alit  
And free to fly thence—but knit

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

With them and through them into the sullen ground.  
With acceptance profound  
And casual as theirs I stood, watching them there,  
And knew you beside me, John Clare.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

## AT THE GRAVE OF HENRY VAUGHAN

ABOVE the voiceful windings of a river  
An old green slab of simply graven stone  
Shuns notice, overshadowed by a yew.  
Here Vaughan lies dead, whose name flows on for ever  
Through pastures of the spirit washed with dew  
And starlit with eternities unknown. 10

Here sleeps the Silurist ; the loved physician ;  
The face that left no portraiture behind ;  
The skull that housed white angels and had vision  
Of daybreak through the gateways of the mind.  
Here faith and mercy, wisdom and humility  
(Whose influence shall prevail for evermore)  
Shine. And this lowly grave tells Heaven's tranquillity.  
And here stand I, a suppliant at the door.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

## ON READING SOME NEGLECTED POETS

THIS is a long road in a dubious mist ;  
Not with a groan nor any heard complaint 20  
We march, uncomprehending, not expecting Time  
To show us beacons.

## ISHMAEL

When we have struggled on a little farther  
This madness will yield of itself,  
There will not be any singing or sudden joy,  
But a load will be set down.

And maybe no one will ever come,  
No other traveller passing that way,  
Therefore the load we lifted will be left,  
A milestone, insignificant.

MICHAEL ROBERTS

## ISHMAEL

THE night you died the air was full of sighing,  
From jungle passes blew the sickening breeze, 10  
Across the moon a dingy smoke was flying,  
The black palms tossed and tossed the bounding seas,  
The warm gusts filled the tent where you were lying  
And swayed the lantern-light across your knees,  
The crepitant crickets everywhere were crying  
Between the sighs and sudden silences.

Right well you knew, and we, that you were dying  
Self-exiled, self-disgraced, self-overthrown,  
You who had spent youth, blood and bone denying  
Blood of your blood, bone of your very bone. 20  
We spoke : you grinned, in iron derision eyeing  
The proffered cup. Then between groan and groan  
Forced out your last : " God damn you and your  
prying !  
Why can't you let a bastard die alone ? "

The night you died the air was full of sighing.

ROBERT NICHOLS

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### WANDERING MEN

WHEN sudden night had trapped the wood,  
We stumbled by dark earthing  
To find a path we never knew  
Though we went down on bare knee.  
But as we prayed there came a sound  
Of canticles upon the air,  
A momentary flame that rounded  
The bell-house of Kildare.

Among her women on the threshold  
Great Brigid gave us welcome. 10  
She had concealed in colder veil  
Too soon the flaming of her forehead  
That drew our eyelids in the wood.  
By shadowy arch she led the way,  
She brought us to a lighted room  
And served each one at table.

I think it was the food of Eden  
We shared, for that new ale,  
Though brighter than the serpent-reed,  
Was not indeed of summer's brew, 20  
And drowsily we heard the calling  
Of voices from an instrument—  
Soft as the music that King Saul  
Had feared beyond his tent.

And all that night I was aware  
Of shapes no priest can see,  
The centaur at a house of prayer,  
The sceptred strangers from the East.  
Confined in dream we saw again  
How Brigid, while her women slept 30  
Around her, temple'd by the flame,  
Sat in a carven chair.



## THE PAST GENERATION

We wakened with the early blackbird  
Before the oaks had drawn  
An old sun-circle in the grass :  
The sightly house was gone.  
Yet we gave praise to that sky-woman  
For wayfare and a vision shown  
At night to harmless men who have  
No parish of their own.

AUSTIN CLARKE

## THE PAST GENERATION

CORNERED within a mind that from its dark berth  
Sags like an old cobweb of wings and bones, 10  
Yet clad in a fireside shadow—he sits inert,  
A pensioned man of seventy years or so,  
Nodding and leaning to feel the white dough  
Ripening to bread upon a scorching hearth ;  
But once into the crust his thumb is spread—  
With smells of yeast enlivening the air—  
His eyes seem rich with black ale ; he lifts the bread  
As though his hands are full of prayer.

And while the cake cools within the window space  
That pane of scowls glows like a holy place. 20

Browbeaten he stands there now scanning the moun-  
tain  
That throws a long siege against the shadowy glass,  
Blinding that spyhole, where light squeezed from the  
pincers  
Of dusk and dark, like death, has creased his face—  
Creased as his crushed eyes squint with strain of sinew,  
Poor seedless skin, the jail of all his race,  
The last thing human next the wind's dominion,  
The one thing hostile to the mountain's peace ;



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

—A peace unbroken save by a sudden fright  
From creaking wild duck winged in headlong flight.  
Against that huddled strength his hate is pitched ;  
And now he glowers at his roots of heath,  
That squat their evil claws in this dark hour  
Upon the thrown clay cabins of a street :  
Homes like worn graves, tombstoned with the gables  
That, shading our race once in the blazing years,  
Sheltered those mothers, who breeding a stock of nobles  
Raised them to grace with a grey baptism of tears. 10

And yet that stock gave stark air a green delight :  
Its young men, hardy, nimble of limb and wit  
To shorten the road, inveigle a bird or bind  
Proud necks to bridles and rough lands to wheat ;  
With girls of wild sweetness, athletically designed  
From nape and hip to instep and over whose breast  
Snuggled the lazy brightness of the West.

Now those delights are all gone ; and, look, old pry,  
Where lightning struck, burnt bare that blossoming  
tree,  
A black hand points indictment at the sky. 20

So he—last trembler from those heartscalding years—  
Making this hour unearthly with the dead,  
Ceases to spy on what the night has hid  
And while each timid thing creeps into bed,  
Clamping his door—more like a coffin lid—  
He turns, he yawns and having locked the sashes  
Calmly he rakes the fire, till deep in ashes  
The hushed flame sleeps within its own red dream.

He's now in bed ; but there's not a sign he'll ease  
The weight of the great sleep that's on his bones, 30  
The weight that he has gathered with the years—  
Too weary now he seems even to doze

## COLONEL FANTOCK

And fearing death may oust him from those bones  
"O holy God" he sighs, he turns, he eyes  
The bare breast Virgin suckling Her Child  
Printed in smoky gold above the bed.

And as he mouths Time's lullabies, his beads  
Barely keep count of prayers in yawned retreats ;  
And so from floor and stool old shadows creep  
With crickets ticking out the time of sleep.

F. R. HIGGINS

## COLONEL FANTOCK

Thus spoke the lady underneath the trees :  
I was a member of a family 10  
Whose legend was of hunting—(all the rare  
And unattainable brightness of the air)—  
A race whose fabled skill in falconry  
Was used on the small song-birds and a winged  
And blinded Destiny. . . . I think that only  
Winged ones know the highest cyrie is so lonely.

There in a land, austere and elegant,  
The castle seemed an arabesque in music ;  
We moved in an hallucination born 20  
Of silence, which like music gave us lotus  
To eat, perfuming lips and our long eyelids  
As we trailed over the sad summer grass,  
Or sat beneath a smooth and mournful tree.

And Time passed suavely, imperceptibly.

But Dagobert and Peregrine and I  
Were children then ; we walked like shy gazelles  
Among the music of the thin flower-bells.  
And life still held some promise,—never ask  
Of what,—but life seemed less a stranger, then,  
Than ever after in this cold existence. 30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

I always was a little outside life,—  
And so the things we touch could comfort me ;  
I loved the shy dreams we could hear and see—  
For I was like one dead, like a small ghost,  
A little cold air wandering and lost.

All day within the straw-roofed arabesque  
Of the towered castle and the sleepy gardens wandered  
We ; those delicate paladins the waves  
Told us fantastic legends that we pondered.

And the soft leaves were breasted like a dove,                   10  
Crooning old mournful tales of untrue love.

When night came, sounding like the growth of trees,  
My great-grandmother bent to say good-night,  
And the enchanted moonlight seemed transformed  
Into the silvery tinkling of an old  
And gentle music-box that played a tune  
Of Circean enchantments and far seas ;  
Her voice was lulling like the splash of these.  
When she had given me her good-night kiss,  
There, in her lengthened shadow, I saw this                   20  
Old military ghost with mayfly whiskers,—  
Poor harmless creature, blown by the cold wind,  
Boasting of unseen unreal victories  
To a harsh unbelieving world unkind,—  
For all the battles that this warrior fought  
Were with cold poverty and helpless age—  
His spoils were shelters from the winter's rage.  
And so for ever through his braggart voice,  
Through all that martial trumpet's sound, his soul  
Wept with a little sound so pitiful,                   30  
Knowing that he is outside life for ever  
With no one that will warm or comfort him. . . .  
He is not even dead, but Death's buffoon  
On a bare stage, a shrunken pantaloon.

## COLONEL FANTOCK

His military banner never fell,  
Nor his account of victories, the stories  
Of old apocryphal misfortunes, glories  
Which comforted his heart in later life  
When he was the Napoleon of the schoolroom  
And all the victories he gained were over  
Little boys who would not learn to spell.

All day within the sweet and ancient gardens  
He had my childish self for audience—  
Whose body flat and strange, whose pale straight hair  
Made me appear as though I had been drowned— 11  
(We all have the remote air of a legend)—  
And Dagobert my brother whose large strength,  
Great body and grave beauty still reflect  
The Angevin dead kings from whom we spring ;  
And sweet as the young tender winds that stir  
In thickets when the earliest flower-bells sing  
Upon the boughs, was his just character ;  
And Peregrine the youngest with a naïve  
Shy grace like a faun's, whose slant eyes seemed 20  
The warm green light beneath eternal boughs.  
His hair was like the fronds of feathers, life  
In him was changing ever, springing fresh  
As the dark songs of birds . . . the furry warmth  
And purring sound of fires was in his voice  
Which never failed to warm and comfort me.

And there were haunted summers in Troy Park  
When all the stillness budded into leaves ;  
We listened, like Ophelia drowned in blond  
And fluid hair, beneath stag-antlered trees ; 30  
Then, in the ancient park the country-pleasant  
Shadows fell as brown as any pheasant,  
And Colonel Fantock seemed like one of these.  
Sometimes for comfort in the castle kitchen  
He drowsed, where with a sweet and velvet lip

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

The snapdragons within the fire  
Of their red summer never tire.  
And Colonel Fantock liked our company ;  
For us he wandered over each old lie,  
Changing the flowering hawthorn, full of bees,  
Into the silver helm of Hercules,  
For us defended Troy from the top stair  
Outside the nursery, when the calm full moon  
Was like the sound within the growth of trees.

But then came one cruel day in deepest June, 10  
When pink flowers seemed a sweet Mozartian tune,  
And Colonel Fantock pondered o'er a book.  
A gay voice like a honeysuckle nook,—  
So sweet,—said, “ It is Colonel Fantock's age  
Which makes him babble.” . . . Blown by winter's  
rage

The poor old man then knew his creeping fate,  
The darkening shadow that would take his sight  
And hearing ; and he thought of his saved pence  
Which scarce would rent a grave . . . that youthful  
voice

Was a dark bell which ever clanged “ Too late ”—  
A creeping shadow that would steal from him 21  
Even the little boys who would not spell,—  
His only prisoners. . . . On that June day  
Cold Death had taken his first citadel.

EDITH SITWELL

## THE SPRIG OF LIME

HE lay, and those who watched him were amazed  
To see unheralded beneath the lids  
Twin tears, new-gathered at the price of pain,  
Start and at once run crookedly athwart  
Cheeks channelled long by pain, never by tears.



## THE SPRIG OF LIME

So desolate, too, the sigh next uttered  
They had wept also, but his great lips moved,  
And bending down one heard, "A sprig of lime ;  
Bring me a sprig of lime." Whereat she stole  
With dumb signs forth to pluck the thing he craved.

So lay he till a lime-twigg had been snapped  
From some still branch that swept the outer grass  
Far from the silver pillar of the bole,  
Which mounting past the house's crusted roof  
Split into massy limbs, crossed boughs, a maze 10  
Of close-compacted intercontorted staffs  
Bowered in foliage, where through the sun  
Shot sudden showers of light or crystal spars,  
Or wavered in a green and vitreous flood.

And all the while in faint and fainter tones,  
Scarce audible on deepened evening's hush,  
He framed his curious and last request  
For "lime, a sprig of lime." Her trembling hand  
Closed his loose fingers on the awkward stem,  
Covered about with gentle heart-shaped leaves 20  
And under dangling, pale as honey-wax,  
Square clusters of sweet-scented starry flowers.

She laid his bent arm back upon his breast,  
Then watched above white knuckles clenched in  
prayer.

He never moved. Only at last his eyes  
Opened, then brightened in such avid gaze  
She feared the coma mastered him again. . . .  
But no ; strange sob rose chuckling in his throat,  
A strange ecstasy suffused the flesh  
Of that just mask so sun-dried, gouged, and old, 30  
Which few—too few !—had loved, too many feared.  
"Father !" she cried ; "Father !"

He did not hear.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

She knelt, and kneeling drank the scent of limes,  
Blown round the slow blind by a vesperal gust,  
Till the room swam. So the lime-incense blew  
Into her life as once it had in his,  
Though how and when and with what ageless charge  
Of sorrow and deep joy how could she know?

Sweet lime that often at the height of noon  
Diffusing dizzy fragrance from your boughs,  
Tasselled with blossoms more innumerable  
Than the black bees, the uproar of whose toil 10  
Filled your green vaults, winning such metheglin  
As clouds their sappy cells, distil, as once  
Ye used, your sunniest emanations  
Toward the window where a woman kneels—  
She who within that room in childish hours  
Lay through the lasting murmur of blanch'd noon  
Behind the sultry blind, now full, now flat,  
Drinking anew of every odorous breath,  
Supremely happy in her ignorance  
Of Time that hastens hourly and of Death 20  
Who need not haste. Scatter your fumes, O lime,  
Loose from each hispid star of citron bloom,  
Tangled beneath the labyrinthine boughs,  
Cloud on such stinging cloud of exhalation  
As reeks of youth, fierce life, and summer's prime,  
Though hardly now shall he in that dusk room  
Savour your sweetness, since the very sprig,  
Profuse of blossom and of essences,  
He smells not, who in a paltering hand  
Clasps it laid close his peaked and gleaming face 30  
Propped in the pillow. Breathe silent, lofty lime,  
Your curfew secrets out in fervid scent  
To the attendant shadows! Tinge the air  
Of the midsummer night that now begins,  
At an owl's oaring flight from dusk to dusk,  
And downward caper of the giddy bat



## FOREFATHERS

Hawking against the lustre of bare skies,  
With something of th' unfathomable bliss  
He, who lies dying there, knew once of old  
In the serene trance of a summer night,  
When with th' abundance of his young bride's hair  
Loosed on his breast he lay and dared not sleep,  
Listening for the scarce motion of your boughs,  
Which sighed with bliss as she with blissful sleep,  
And drinking desperately each honied wave  
Of perfume wafted past the ghostly blind, 10  
First knew th' implacable and bitter sense  
Of Time that hastes and Death who need not haste.  
Shed your last sweetness, limes !

But now no more.

She, fruit of that night's love, she heeds you not,  
Who bent, compassionate, to the dim floor,  
Takes up the sprig of lime and presses it  
In pain against the stumbling of her heart,  
Knowing, untold, he cannot need it now.

ROBERT NICHOLS

## FOREFATHERS

HERE they went with smock and crook,  
Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade, 20  
Here they mudded out the brook  
And here their hatchet cleared the glade :  
Harvest-supper woke their wit,  
Huntsman's moon their wooings lit.

From this church they led their brides,  
From this church themselves were led  
Shoulder-high ; on these waysides  
Sat to take their beer and bread.  
Names are gone—what men they were  
These their cottages declare. 30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Names are vanished, save the few  
In the old brown Bible scrawled ;  
These were men of pith and thew,  
Whom the city never called ;  
Scarce could read or hold a quill,  
Built the barn, the forge, the mill.

On the green they watched their sons  
Playing till too dark to see,  
As their fathers watched them once,  
As my father once watched me ;  
While the bat and beetle flew  
On the warm air webbed with dew.

10

Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Men from whom my ways begin,  
Here I know you by your ground  
But I know you not within—  
There is silence, there survives  
Not a moment of your lives.

Like the bee that now is blown  
Honey-heavy on my hand,  
From his toppling tansy-throne  
In the green tempestuous land—  
I'm in clover now, nor know  
Who made honey long ago.

20

EDMUND BLUNDEN

## THE PASSING OF A STOIC

Now stiff who once was willow,  
Now bent who once was tall,  
He walks along the garden  
At noon and afternoon,

## MR. NUTCH

And while the buds are yellow  
His life is at the fall,  
Yet he will ask no pardon  
Who never asked a boon.

With death he will not quarrel,  
Nor bid the gods be kind,  
The shadow of disaster  
Has been his place of school,  
And now he makes no moral  
Of echoes in his mind  
That tell of life the master  
With whips for man the fool.

10

With eyes upon the gravel  
He does not heed the year,  
Among the lives that waken  
He moves but does not live,  
A bitter way to travel  
He travels without fear,  
But with no blessing taken  
Goes on with none to give.

20

JOHN DRINKWATER

## MR. NUTCH

MR. NUTCH,  
Brown-bearded bear,  
Chased the scamps of boys through fruit-trees.  
“Scamps,” he called them,  
But it was a serious affair,  
Breaking down the Palings  
And stealing Property.  
Clumsily he would grab and ramble,  
Angrily he would dart and grumble,  
Heavily he would sway and shamble  
After the nimble boys.

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

He would stumble among the trees,  
Full-branchèd apples  
That sagged beneath their rosy swags,  
Or crabs that trailed their bitter-sweet rockets  
Across the crisp autumn air.

Bombardments of apples  
And impudent laughter  
Met Mr. Nutch  
Where'er he might wander,  
His crinkled boots crusted with crystals 10  
Under the glittering cobweb-tangled autumn.  
(Oh,

    If only Mrs. Nutch  
        Could have tidied up the season,  
        What a different autumn it would have been,  
        With its neatly piled pyramids of apples,  
        Sorted according to size and colour,  
        Even the branches graded,  
        Placed symmetrically  
        One above another, 20  
        The grass dry, well-aired  
        And of an even height !)

But, as it was,  
There, heavily trudging,  
Angry and out of breath  
Mr. Nutch must grab and ramble  
From one walled garden to another.  
At his approach  
The birds would flutter in the fruit nets,  
Bump and struggle in the fruit nets ; 30  
Each small bird that pecked the honeyed heart  
Of golden or grape-blushing plum,  
Was in reality a vulture  
Feeding on Mr. Nutch's entrails—

## THE HONEY-SEEKER

Mr. Nutch,  
That Prometheus bound to an orchard.  
But the birds would flutter and struggle,  
For Mr. Nutch  
Was the natural enemy of every bird,  
However soft or gaudy-feathered,  
Just as Mrs. Nutch  
Was the sworn foe  
Of every cobweb,  
Mouse and  
Roman Catholic.  
OSBERT SITWELL

## THE HONEY-SEEKER

(WHITE'S *Natural History of Selborne*, LETTER XXVII)

I CANNOT live here, for there are no bees, 10  
Only bare sand-dunes and the cold brown shoals,  
And on the foreshore common some few foals.  
I run into the marshes over knees,  
Hunting for honey as Old Nick for souls,  
And am afraid in winter I shall freeze ;

Because my home is far down in the South,  
Where are no stolen fields, fenced off with wire,  
But hanging copse, and lazy absent squire,  
And flocks of buzzers in the months of drouth,  
Whose sting I feared no more than glow-worm's fire,  
Taking them boldly in my open mouth. 21

Yet ever first the tiny venomed hair  
With thumb and shrewd forefinger out I drew,  
So that they were obedient and true,  
Although the strolling parson sighed : " Beware !  
That kind pricks when it is dead." I nothing knew  
But sweetness and their bodies' golden glare.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Sometimes between my shirt and sunburnt skin  
I have fostered fifty of these pilferers,  
Whom I caught yarely on the yawning furze  
Or father's cottage, starred with jessamin,  
Teaching my lips to imitate their din,  
As nightjars imitate the white moth's whirs.

Or into a bee-garden slide I could  
And, squatting close against the stools, rap out  
My summons coaxingly, and snatch the rout  
As forth it fared, or in a hungry mood 10  
Upset the hives, and vanish with a shout  
Before the drowsy owner understood.

An innkeeper there was who brewed his mead ;  
I drudged beside him for a draught of it.  
The bee-wine in my throat, I seemed to flit,  
All honey ! But the dullard could not read  
Nature, and girded at me, in his fit,  
For swilling out of drunkenness and greed.

My summer's taking served me through the year ;  
A dormouse from October, I would doze, 20  
Curled in the firelit corner while it froze,  
And start up slowly, as new leaves appear.  
Gray folk turn peevish when the youngest grows ;  
To gain a pittance have they sent me here.

I miss the orchard and my wasp-filled flask.  
There are no bumble-bees on the sea's back ;  
And if I hurry on a straggler's track,  
Men jerk me round to my forsaken task  
By the potatoes or the turnip sack,  
And heaven is denied me when I ask. 30

E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN

## APRIL FOOL

### FARMER'S BOY

It is a naked country without trees ;  
Scourged by winds from the seas ;  
Bald and bare ;  
Harsh with sounds that drive like stones through the  
air. . . .  
They do say  
There were forests here once on a day ;  
But the great wars stole them away.

And when I walk at noon upon the bare,  
The beaten ridge, where  
The grass grows, 10  
Where once, they say, the pines climbed in rows,  
I do hear  
A singing like to harps in my ear,  
And like a ship at sea the wind goes.  
ROSE MACAULAY

## APRIL FOOL

WHEN April flowers adorn the copse  
And showery drops  
Their petals chide,  
I walk the woods to hear anew  
Sweet time undo  
His ancient stops ; 20  
For now the thronged dark boughs have shoaled  
Their glimmering tide,  
The mice are bold,  
Young coney hops,  
And full of ruth the snakes do glide.



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And ever-living ever-dead  
Time lies abed,  
For thus it seems  
His tongue best tells the lovely birds  
Their lovely words.  
O lightly sped,  
Soft smiling time ! hold back the showers,  
Divert the streams,  
The so brief hours  
From age so dread, 10  
And gild with youth my dying dreams.  
A. E. COPPARD

## THREE OLD BROTHERS

WHILE some goes dancing reels and some  
Goes stuttering love in ditches,  
The three old brothers rise from bed,  
And moan, and pin their breeches.  
And one says, " I can sleep no more,  
I'd liefer far go weeping,  
For how can honest men lie still  
When brats can spoil their sleeping ? "  
And Blind Tom says, that's eighty years, 20  
" If I was ten years younger  
I'd take a stick and welt their rumps,  
And gall their gamest runner."  
Then James the youngest cries, " Praise God,  
We have outlived our passion ! "  
And by their fire of roots all three  
Praise God after a fashion.

Says James, " I loved, when I was young,  
A lass of one and twenty,  
That had the grace of all the queens 30  
And broke men's hearts in plenty ;

### THREE OLD BROTHERS

But now the girl's a gammy crone,  
With no soft sides or bosom,  
And all the ones she kist abed  
Where the fat maggot chews 'em.  
And though she had not kiss for me,  
And though myself is older,  
And though my thighs are cold to-night,  
Their thighs, I think, are colder."

And Blind Tom says, " I knew a man  
A girl refused for lover 10  
Worked in America forty years,  
And heaped copper on copper ;  
And came back all across the foam,  
Dressed up in silks and satins,  
And watched for her from dawn to dark,  
And from Compline to Matins ;  
And when she passed him in her shawl,  
He burst his sides with laughing,  
And went back happy to the west,  
And heeded no man's scoffing. 20  
And Christ," moans Tom, " if I'd his luck  
I'd not mind cold nor coughing ! "

Then Patcheen says, " My lot's a lot  
All men on earth might envy,  
That saw the girl I could not get  
Nurse an untimely baby."

And all three say, " Dear heart ! Dear heart ! "  
And James the youngest mutters,  
" Praise God we have outlived our griefs  
And not fell foul like others, 30  
Like Paris and the Grecian chiefs  
And the three Ulster brothers ! "

FRANK O'CONNOR

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### FANCY'S KNELL

WHEN lads were home from labour  
At Abdon under Clee,  
A man would call his neighbour  
And both would send for me.  
And where the light in lances  
Across the mead was laid,  
There to the dances  
I fetched my flute and played.

Ours were idle pleasures,  
Yet oh, content we were,  
The young to wind the measures,  
The old to heed the air ;  
And I to lift with playing  
From tree and tower and steep  
The light delaying,  
And flute the sun to sleep.

10

The youth toward his fancy  
Would turn his brow of tan,  
And Tom would pair with Nancy  
And Dick step off with Fan ;  
The girl would lift her glances  
To his, and both be mute :  
Well went the dances  
At evening to the flute.

20

Wenlock Edge was umbered,  
And bright was Abdon Burf,  
And warm between them slumbered  
The smooth green miles of turf ;  
Until from grass and clover  
The upshot beam would fade,  
And England over  
Advanced the lofty shade.

30

## THE FOOL

The lofty shade advances,  
I fetch my flute and play :  
Come, lads, and learn the dances  
And praise the tune to-day.  
To-morrow, more's the pity,  
Away we both must hic,  
To air the ditty,  
And to earth I.

A. E. HOUSMAN

## THE FOOL

Poor fool who stood alone,  
A-staring at a tree,  
Wherein a wild bird sang ;  
The world with tidings rang,  
Of a new world to be ;  
He stood as any stone  
A-staring at a tree.

10

Honour was everywhere  
In action on that day ;  
Old wrongs were put away,  
And envy overthrown  
By nations met in prayer,  
As sometimes warriors pray ;  
And he, the poor fool, he  
Still stood as any stone  
To stare upon a tree.

20

It was a silly bird,  
Piping an idle note,  
Unworthy to be heard  
By men come to engage  
Another golden age ;

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

A foolish bird, who wrote  
But green songs in a tree  
With but a fool to see,  
With but a fool to tell  
In his own silly word  
That such a song was well  
When the heroic mind  
Was loud among mankind.

Loud upon land and sea  
Victorious goodwill  
Made music that the scribes  
Of honour must record  
Upon the utmost hill,  
Among the hidden tribes  
In forests of the night ;  
The coming of the lord,  
No less, was that decree,  
That benison, that light ;  
And still because a tree  
Made lyrics all the day  
He stared the time away.

10

20

Poor fool, to spend the time  
Of honour in a rhyme,  
Because a wild bird set  
His wisdom in a net.

JOHN DRINKWATER

## TO AN OLD LADY

RIPENESS is all ; her in her cooling planet  
Revere ; do not presume to think her wasted.  
Project her no projectile, plan nor man it ;  
Gods cool in turn, by the sun long outlasted.

## THE LAMPLIGHTER

Our earth alone given no name of god  
Gives, too, no hold for such a leap to aid her ;  
Landing, you break some palace and seem odd ;  
Bees sting their need, the keeper's queen invader.

No, to your telescope ; spy out the land ;  
Watch while her ritual is still to see,  
Still stand her temples emptying in the sand  
Whose waves o'erthrew their crumbled tracery ;

Still stand uncalled-on her soul's appanage ;  
Much social detail whose successor fades, 10  
Wit used to run a house and to play Bridge,  
And tragic fervour, to dismiss her maids.

Years her precession do not throw from gear.  
She reads a compass certain of her pole ;  
Confident, finds no confines on her sphere,  
Whose failing crops are in her sole control.

Stars how much further from me fill my night,  
Strange that she too should be inaccessible,  
Who shares my sun. He curtains her from sight,  
And but in darkness is she visible. 20

WILLIAM EMPSON

## THE LAMPLIGHTER

HERE to the leisured side of life,  
Remote from traffic, free from strife,  
A cul-de-sac, a sanctuary  
Where old quaint customs creep to die  
And only ancient memories stir,  
At evening comes the lamplighter ;  
With measured steps, without a sound,  
He treads the unalterable round,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Soundlessly touching one by one  
The waiting posts that stand to take  
The faint blue bubbles in his wake ;  
And when the night begins to wane  
He comes to take them back again,  
Before the chilly dawn can blight  
The delicate frail buds of light.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

### OLD SOLDIER

I RETURN to the land  
Of tillage peace,  
Who have wandered and found 10  
No golden fleece,

But only a rag  
On a lifting thorn—  
An ironic flag  
Crow-pecked, forlorn.

Love's frosted buds,  
That could not shake  
The nursing gods  
Of green, awake.

Petty squabbling 20  
My eyes did see,  
And Achilles wobbling  
In jeopardy,

And the men of thought  
Being hustled on  
Till there was not  
Under the sun



## THE NEXT WAR

An unflustered bird  
Of evening mood  
Or a poet's word  
In the interlude.

Over the war-loud  
Fields I went,  
Strumming the crowd-  
False instrument,

One with the savage  
And insane. . . .  
O War, to ravage  
My virgin Spain !

10

PATRICK KAVANAGH

## THE NEXT WAR

Out there, we've walked quite friendly up to Death ;  
Sat down and eaten with him, cool and bland,—  
Pardoned his spilling mess-tins in our hand.  
We've sniffed the green thick odour of his breath,—  
Our eyes wept, but our courage didn't writhe.  
He's spat at us with bullets and he's coughed  
Shrapnel. We chorussed when he sang aloft ;  
We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe. 20

Oh, Death was never enemy of ours !  
We laughed at him, we leagued with him, old chum.  
No soldier's paid to kick against his powers.  
We laughed, knowing that better men would come,  
And greater wars ; when each proud fighter brags  
He wars on Death—for Life ; not men—for flags.  
WILFRED OWEN

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### DEAD MAN'S DUMP

THE plunging limbers over the shattered track  
Racketed with their rusty freight,  
Stuck out like many crowns of thorns,  
And the rusty stakes like sceptres old  
To stay the flood of brutish men  
Upon our brothers dear.

The wheels lurched over sprawled dead  
But pained them not, though their bones crunched ;  
Their shut mouths made no moan.  
They lie there huddled, friend and foeman, 10  
Man born of man, and born of woman ;  
And shells go crying over them  
From night till night and now.

Earth has waited for them,  
All the time of their growth  
Fretting for their decay :  
Now she has them at last !  
In the strength of their strength  
Suspended—stopped and held.

What fierce imaginings their dark souls lit ? 20  
Earth ! Have they gone into you ?  
Somewhere they must have gone,  
And flung on your hard back  
Is their souls' sack,  
Emptied of God-ancestral essences.  
Who hurled them out ? Who hurled ?

None saw their spirits' shadow shake the grass,  
Or stood aside for the half-used life to pass  
Out of those doomed nostrils and the doomed mouth,  
When the swift iron burning bee 30  
Drained the wild honey of their youth.

## DEAD MAN'S DUMP

What of us who, flung on the shrieking pyre,  
Walk, our usual thoughts untouched,  
Our lucky limbs as on ichor fed,  
Immortal seeming ever ?  
Perhaps when the flames beat loud on us,  
A fear may choke in our veins  
And the startled blood may stop.

The air is loud with death,  
The dark air spurts with fire,  
The explosions ceaseless are. 10  
Timelessly now, some minutes past,  
These dead strode time with vigorous life,  
Till the shrapnel called " An end ! "  
But not to all. In bleeding pangs  
Some borne on stretchers dreamed of home,  
Dear things, war-blotted from their hearts.

A man's brains splattered on  
A stretcher-bearer's face ;  
His shook shoulders slipped their load,  
But when they bent to look again 20  
The drowning soul was sunk too deep  
For human tenderness.

They left this dead with the older dead,  
Stretched at the cross roads.

Burnt black by strange decay  
Their sinister faces lie,  
The lid over each eye ;  
The grass and coloured clay  
More motion have than they,  
Joined to the great sunk silences. 30

Here is one not long dead.  
His dark hearing caught our far wheels,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

And the choked soul stretched weak hands  
To reach the living word the far wheels said ;  
The blood-dazed intelligence beating for light,  
Crying through the suspense of the far torturing  
wheels

Swift for the end to break  
Or the wheels to break,  
Cried as the tide of the world broke over his sight,  
“ Will they come ? Will they ever come ? ”  
Even as the mixed hoofs of the mules,  
The quivering-bellied mules, 10  
And the rushing wheels all mixed  
With his tortured upturned sight.

So we crashed round the bend,  
We heard his weak scream,  
We heard his very last sound,  
And our wheels grazed his dead face.

ISAAC ROSENBERG

## ASLEEP

UNDER his helmet, up against his pack,  
After the many days of work and waking,  
Sleep took him by the brow and laid him back.  
And in the happy no-time of his sleeping, 20  
Death took him by the heart. There was a quaking  
Of the aborted life within him leaping . . .  
Then chest and sleepy arms once more fell slack.  
And soon the slow, stray blood came creeping  
From the intrusive lead, like ants on track.

Whether his deeper sleep lie shaded by the shaking  
Of great wings, and the thoughts that hung the stars,  
High-pillowed on calm pillows of God's making  
Above these clouds, these rains, these sleets of lead,  
And these winds' scimitars ; 30

## BREAK OF DAY IN THE TRENCHES

—Or whether yet his thin and sodden head  
Confuses more and more with the low mould,  
His hair being one with the grey grass  
And finished fields of autumn that are old. . . .  
Who knows? Who hopes? Who troubles? Let it  
pass!

He sleeps. He sleeps less tremulous, less cold,  
Than we who must awake, and waking, say Alas!

WILFRED OWEN

## BREAK OF DAY IN THE TRENCHES

THE darkness crumbles away—  
It is the same old druid Time as ever.  
Only a live thing leaps my hand— 10  
A queer sardonic rat—  
As I pull the parapet's poppy  
To stick behind my ear.  
Droll rat, they would shoot you if they knew  
Your cosmopolitan sympathies  
(And God knows what antipathies).  
Now you have touched this English hand  
You will do the same to a German—  
Soon, no doubt, if it be your pleasure  
To cross the sleeping green between. 20  
It seems you inwardly grin as you pass  
Strong eyes, fine limbs, haughty athletes  
Less chanced than you for life,  
Bound to the whims of murder,  
Sprawled in the bowels of the earth,  
The torn fields of France.  
What do you see in our eyes  
At the shrieking iron and flame  
Hurled through still heavens?  
What quaver—what heart aghast? 30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Poppies whose roots are in man's veins  
Drop, and are ever dropping ;  
But mine in my ear is safe,  
Just a little white with the dust.

ISAAC ROSENBERG

## RETURNING, WE HEAR THE LARKS

SOMBRE the night is :  
And, though we have our lives, we know  
What sinister threat lurks there.

Dragging these anguished limbs, we only know  
This poison-blasted track opens on our camp—  
On a little safe sleep.

10

But hark ! Joy—joy—strange joy.  
Lo ! Heights of night ringing with unseen larks :  
Music showering on our upturned listening faces.

Death could drop from the dark  
As easily as song—  
But song only dropped,  
Like a blind man's dreams on the sand  
By dangerous tides ;  
Like a girl's dark hair, for she dreams no ruin lies  
there,  
Or her kisses where a serpent hides.

20

ISAAC ROSENBERG

## GIRL TO SOLDIER ON LEAVE

I LOVE you, Titan lover,  
My own storm-days' Titan.  
Greater than the son of Zeus,  
I know whom I would choose.

## THE GOLDEN ROOM

Titan—my splendid rebel—  
The old Prometheus  
Wanes like a ghost before your power :  
His pangs were joys to yours.

Pallid days, arid and wan,  
Tied your soul fast :  
Babel-cities' smoky tops  
Pressed upon your growth

Weary gyves. What were you  
But a word in the brain's ways,  
Or the sleep of Circe's swine ?  
One gyve holds you yet.

10

It held you hiddenly on the Somme  
Tied from my heart at home :  
O must it loosen now ? I wish  
You were bound with the old, old gyves.

Love ! You love me—your eyes  
Have looked through death at mine.  
You have tempted a grave too much.  
I let you—I repine.

20

ISAAC ROSENBERG

## THE GOLDEN ROOM

Do you remember that still summer evening  
When, in the cosy cream-washed living-room  
Of The Old Nailshop, we all talked and laughed—  
Our neighbours from The Gallows, Catherine  
And Lascelles Abercrombie ; Rupert Brooke ;  
Eleanor and Robert Frost, living a while  
At Little Iddens, who'd brought over with them  
Helen and Edward Thomas ? In the lamplight



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

We talked and laughed ; but, for the most part,  
listened

While Robert Frost kept on and on and on,  
In his slow New England fashion, for our delight,  
Holding us with shrewd turns and racy quips,  
And the rare twinkle of his grave blue eyes ?

We sat there in the lamplight, while the day  
Died from rose-latticed casements, and the plovers  
Called over the low meadows, till the owls  
Answered them from the elms, we sat and talked :  
Now, a quick flash from Abercrombie ; now, 10  
A murmured dry half-heard aside from Thomas ;  
Now, a clear laughing word from Brooke ; and then  
Again Frost's rich and ripe philosophy,  
That had the body and tang of good draught-cider,  
And poured as clear a stream.

'Twas in July  
Of nineteen-fourteen that we sat and talked ;  
Then August brought the war, and scattered us.

Now, on the crest of an Aegean isle,  
Brooke sleeps, and dreams of England : Thomas lies  
'Neath Vimy Ridge, where he, among his fellows, 20  
Died, just as life had touched his lips to song.

And nigh as ruthlessly has life divided  
Us who survive ; for Abercrombie toils  
In a black Northern town, beneath the glower  
Of hanging smoke ; and in America  
Frost farms once more ; and, far from The Old  
Nailshop,  
We sojourn by the Western sea.

And yet,  
Was it for nothing that the little room,  
All golden in the lamplight, thrilled with golden  
Laughter from hearts of friends that summer night ? 30

## MUD

Darkness has fallen on it ; and the shadow  
May never more be lifted from the hearts  
That went through those black years of war, and live.

And still, whenever men and women gather  
For talk and laughter on a summer night,  
Shall not that lamp rekindle ; and the room  
Glow once again alive with light and laughter ;  
And, like a singing star in time's abyss,  
Burn golden-hearted through oblivion ?

WILFRID W. GIBSON

## MUD

TWENTY years ago  
My generation learned  
To be afraid of mud.  
We watched its vileness grow,  
Deeper and deeper churned  
From earth, spirit, and blood.

10

From earth, sweet-smelling enough  
As moorland, field, and coast ;  
Firm beneath the corn,  
Noble to the plough,  
Purified by frost  
Every winter morn.

20

From blood, the invisible river  
Pulsing from the hearts  
Of patient man and beast ;  
The healer and life-giver,  
The union of parts,  
The meaning of the feast.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

From spirit, which is man  
In triumphant mood ;  
Conqueror of fears,  
Alchemist of pain  
Changing bad to good ;  
Master of the spheres.

Earth, the king of space ;  
Blood, the king of time ;  
Spirit, their lord and god ;  
All tumbled from their place, 10  
All trodden into slime,  
All mingled into mud.

RICHARD CHURCH

## REPORT ON EXPERIENCE

I HAVE been young, and now am not too old ;  
And I have seen the righteous forsaken,  
His health, his honour, and his quality taken.  
This is not what we were formerly told.

I have seen a green country, useful to the race,  
Knocked silly with guns and mines, its villages vanished,  
Even the last rat and last kestrel banished—  
God bless us all, this was peculiar grace. 20

I knew Scraphina ; Nature gave her hue,  
Glance, sympathy, note, like one from Eden.  
I saw her smile warp, her lyric deaden ;  
She turned to harlotry—this I took to be new.

Say what you will, our God sees how they run.  
These disillusion are His curious proving  
That He loves humanity and will go on loving ;  
Over there are faith, life, virtue in the sun.  
EDMUND BLUNDEN

## HORSES

## HORSES

THOSE lumbering horses in the steady plough,  
On the bare field—I wonder why, just now,  
They seemed so terrible, so wild and strange,  
Like magic power on the stony grange.

Perhaps some childish hour has come again,  
When I watched fearful, through the blackening rain,  
Their hooves like pistons in an ancient mill  
Move up and down, yet seem as standing still.

Their conquering hooves treading the stubble down  
Were ritual that turned the field to brown, 10  
And their great hulks were seraphim of gold,  
Or mute ecstatic monsters on the mould.

And oh the rapture, when, one furrow done,  
They marched broad-breasted to the sinking sun !  
The light flowed off their bossy sides in flakes ;  
The furrows rolled behind like struggling snakes.

But when at dusk with steaming nostrils home  
They came, they seemed gigantic in the gloam,  
And warm and glowing with mysterious fire  
That lit their smouldering bodies in the mire. 20

Their eyes as brilliant and as wide as night  
Gleamed with a cruel apocalyptic sight.  
Their manes the leaping ire of the wind  
Lifted with rage invisible and blind.

Ah now it fades ! it fades ! and I must pine  
Again for that dread country crystalline,  
Where the blank field and the still-standing tree  
Were bright and fearful presences to me.

EDWIN MUIR

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

## TORIL

*Crowd* : Another Bull ! another Bull !

*Ox :* You heard ?  
Your number's up, the people gave the word !

*Bull* : Feasted on flowers, the darling of the days,  
To-day I've ghastly asphodels to graze,  
Harsh sand to bite, and my own blood to swill—  
Whose dewlap loved the golden-rolling rill,  
When through the rushes, burnished like its tide,  
The lovely cirrus of my thews would slide,  
My heart flame-glazing through the silken skin  
Joy of its mighty furnace lit within. 10  
These crescent horns that scimitared the moon.  
These eyes, the flaming emeralds of noon,  
Whose orbs were fuel to the deathless rays  
And burned the long horizon with their gaze—  
All now to be cut down, and soon to trail  
A sledge of carrion at a horse's tail !

Ox : Flame in the flaming noon, I've seen you run.  
The Anvil of Toledo's now your Sun  
Whose furious aurora they unfold  
(A hurricane of scarlet and of gold) 20  
Whose iron clangs for you, whose dawn you feel,  
The target of its burnished ray of steel !

*Bull* : Ox as you are, what should you know of this  
Who never neared the verge of that abyss ?

Ox : Ox as I am, none better knows than I  
Who led your father's fathers here to die.  
Declaiming clown, I am the mute, the wise ;  
Poets would read enigmas in my eyes.  
My being is confederate with pain,  
Mine to endure as yours is to complain ;

## THE WHITE HARE

I am the thinker, satisfied to know,  
And bought this wisdom for a life of woe.  
Be brave, be patient, and reserve your breath.

*Bull :* But tell me what is blacker than this death.

*Ox :* My impotence.

*Bull :* It was your soul that spoke !—  
More hideous than this martyrdom ?

*Ox :* The Yoke !  
ROY CAMPBELL

## THE WHITE HARE

At the field's edge,  
In the snow-furred sedge,  
Couches the white hare ;  
Her stronghold is there.

10

Brown as the seeding grass  
In summer she was,  
With a creamed belly soft as ermine ;  
Beautiful she was among vermin.  
Silky young she had,  
For her spring was glad ;  
On the fell above  
She ran races with love.  
Softly she went  
In and out of the tent  
Of the tasselled corn ;  
Till the huntsman's horn  
Raised the bogey death  
And she was gone, like breath.

20

Thanks to her senses five  
This charmer is alive :

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Who cheated the loud pack,  
Biting steel, poacher's sack ;  
Among the steep rocks  
Outwitted the fanged fox.

And now winter has come ;  
Winds have made dumb  
Water's crystal chime ;  
In a cloak of rime  
Stands the stiff bracken ;  
Until the cold slacken  
Beauty and terror kiss ;  
There is no armistice.  
Low must the hare lie,  
With great heart and round eye.

10

Wind-scoured and sky-burned  
The fell was her feet spurned  
In the flowery season  
Of her swift unreason ;  
Gone is her March rover ;  
Now noon is soon over ;  
Now the dark falls  
Heavily from sheer walls  
Of snow-cumbering cloud,  
And Earth shines in her shroud.  
All things now fade  
That were in love's image made.  
She too must decrease  
Unto a thorny peace,  
Who put her faith  
In this flesh, in this wraith.  
A hoar habit borrows  
Our light lady of sorrows,  
Nor is her lot strange ;  
Time rings a snow-change.

20

30

LILIAN BOWES LYON



## THE SEALS

### DUCKS

THE ducks are clacking by the brook ;  
The sun is hot, but cool their feathers look.  
Ducks do not plan ambitious schemes :  
Their commerce is in weeds and streams.  
They ask, what's life but sparkle and spray  
In a lazy brook on a lazy day ?  
I think, if I were five feet something shorter,  
I might have been a duck upon the water,  
A portly duck, with a shining bill  
Yellow and spruce as a daffodil. 10  
To me, possessed of an idle mind,  
That seems a life of the perfect kind.

Two bicycles plunge into the water—  
Two boys intending war and slaughter.  
The brook is shallow here. There is a noise  
Of water, and terror, and reckless boys.  
The stream turns brown with mud. It rocks and heaves.  
And the ducks' brains flutter like wind-tossed leaves,  
They waddle and cackle in consternation,  
While the boys are leaping with jubilation, 20  
And I can see that man and duck  
Are both cursed by a dancing luck.

CLIFFORD DYMENT

## THE SEALS

LEAVE her alone,  
She is the Island's daughter.  
Sleek heads, dark heads  
Are risen from the water :  
Leave her the company  
Her songs have brought her.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

The old gray music doctors  
Of the ocean,  
Their holy, happy eyes  
Shining devotion,  
Applaud and blow  
In foam and soft commotion.

It is her hour,  
The Island's only daughter.  
The dark, sleek heads  
Are risen from the water : 10  
Leave her the company  
Her songs have brought her.

L. A. G. STRONG

## THE VIPER

BAREFOOT I went and made no sound ;  
The earth was hot beneath :  
The air was quivering around,  
The circling kestrel eyed the ground  
And hung above the heath.

There in the pathway stretched along  
The lovely serpent lay :  
She reared not up the heath among, 20  
She bowed her head, she sheathed her tongue,  
And shining stole away.

Fair was the brave embroidered dress,  
Fairer the gold eyes shone :  
Loving her not, yet did I bless  
The fallen angel's comeliness ;  
And gazed when she had gone.

RUTH PITTER

## SNAKE

## SNAKE

A SNAKE came to my water-trough  
On a hot, hot day, and I in pyjamas for the heat,  
To drink there.

In the deep, strange-scented shade of the great dark  
carob-tree  
I came down the steps with my pitcher  
And must wait, must stand and wait, for there he  
was at the trough before me.

He reached down from a fissure in the earth-wall in  
the gloom  
And trailed his yellow-brown slackness soft-bellied  
down, over the edge of the stone trough  
And rested his throat upon the stone bottom,  
And where the water had dripped from the tap, in a  
small clearness, 10  
He sipped with his straight mouth,  
Softly drank through his straight gums, into his slack  
long body,  
Silently.

Someone was before me at my water-trough,  
And I, like a second comer, waiting.

He lifted his head from his drinking, as cattle do,  
And looked at me vaguely, as drinking cattle do,  
And flickered his two-forked tongue from his lips, and  
mused a moment,  
And stooped and drank a little more,  
Being earth-brown, earth-golden from the burning  
bowels of the earth 20  
On the day of Sicilian July, with Etna smoking.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

The voice of my education said to me  
He must be killed,  
For in Sicily the black, black snakes are innocent, the  
gold are venomous.

And voices in me said, If you were a man  
You would take a stick and break him now, and  
finish him off.

But must I confess how I liked him,  
How glad I was he had come like a guest in quiet,  
to drink at my water-trough  
And depart peaceful, pacified, and thankless,  
Into the burning bowels of this earth ?

Was it cowardice, that I dared not kill him ? 10  
Was it perversity, that I longed to talk to him ?  
Was it humility, to feel so honoured ?  
I felt so honoured.

And yet those voices :  
*If you were not afraid, you would kill him !*

And truly I was afraid, I was most afraid,  
But even so, honoured still more  
That he should seek my hospitality  
From out the dark door of the secret earth.

He drank enough 20  
And lifted his head, dreamily, as one who has drunken,  
And flickered his tongue like a forked night on the  
air, so black,  
Seeming to lick his lips,  
And looked around like a god, unseeing, into the air,  
And slowly turned his head,  
And slowly, very slowly, as if thrice adream,  
Proceeded to draw his slow length curving round  
And climb again the broken bank of my wall-face.

## SNAKE

And as he put his head into that dreadful hole,  
And as he slowly drew up, snake-easing his shoulders,  
and entered farther,  
A sort of horror, a sort of protest against his with-  
drawing into that horrid black hole,  
Deliberately going into the blackness, and slowly  
drawing himself after,  
Overcame me now his back was turned.

I looked round, I put down my pitcher,  
I picked up a clumsy log  
And threw it at the water-trough with a clatter.

I think it did not hit him,  
But suddenly that part of him that was left behind  
convulsed in undignified haste, 10  
Writhed like lightning, and was gone  
Into the black hole, the earth-lipped fissure in the  
wall-front,  
At which, in the intense still noon, I stared with  
fascination.

And immediately I regretted it.  
I thought how paltry, how vulgar, what a mean act !  
I despised myself and the voices of my accursed human  
education.

And I thought of the albatross,  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.

For he seemed to me again like a king,  
Like a king in exile, uncrowned in the underworld,  
Now due to be crowned again. 21

And so, I missed my chance with one of the lords  
Of life.

And I have something to expiate ;  
A pettiness.

*Taormina*

D. H. LAWRENCE

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### THE SCORPION

LIMPOPO and Tugela churned  
In flood for brown and angry miles  
Melons, maize, domestic thatch,  
The trunks of trees and crocodiles ;

The swollen estuaries were thick  
With flotsam, in the sun one saw  
The corpse of a young negress bruised  
By rocks, and rolling on the shore,

Pushed by the waves of morning, rolled  
Impersonally among shells, 10  
With lolling breasts and bleeding eyes,  
And round her neck were beads and bells.

That was the Africa we knew,  
Where, wandering alone,  
We saw, heraldic in the heat,  
A scorpion on a stone.

WILLIAM PLOMER

### HARDWICK ARRAS

I DREAM of a White Hart that through the meadows  
Of an unending tapestry runs and runs,  
And through great forests lit by languid suns  
It leaps, and into gulfs of velvet shadows 20  
Plunges with pearl-pale sides, and on and on  
Tireless and fearless races, still pursued  
By hounds in gaping-mouthèd multitude,  
And huntsmen clad in rich caparison,  
On steeds with fiery manes and nostrils red ;  
Yet ever safe it bears its amber horns  
And hoofs of dimmest green and silver tail

## THE UNICORN

Through infinite shades and daisy-mottled fields  
Betwixt slim trunks of many a magic vale,  
And under lonely towers, which virgin morns  
Illumine, and its swift pace never yields,  
Calm, wingèd, beautiful, unhurrièd. . . .

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## THE UNICORN

HATE me or love, I care not, as I pass  
To those hid citadels  
Where in the depth of my enchanted glass  
The changeless image dwells ;  
To where for ever blooms the nameless tree ; 10  
For ever, alone and fair,  
The lovely Unicorn beside the sea  
Is laid, and slumbers there.

Give or withhold, all's nothing, as I go  
On to those glimmering grounds  
Where falling secretly and quiet as snow  
The silent music sounds ;  
Where earth is withered away before the eyes,  
And heaven hangs in the air,  
For in the oak the bird of paradise 20  
Alights, and triumphs there.

Slay me or spare, it matters not : I fly  
Ever, for ever rest  
Alone and with a host : in the void sky  
There do I build my nest :  
I lay my beams from star to star, and make  
My house where all is bare ;  
Hate, slay, withhold, I rear it for thy sake  
And thou art with me there.

RUTH PITTER



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE

THE trees are in their autumn beauty,  
The woodland paths are dry,  
Under the October twilight the water  
Mirrors a still sky ;  
Upon the brimming water among the stones  
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth Autumn has come upon me  
Since I first made my count ;  
I saw, before I had well finished,  
All suddenly mount 10  
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings  
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,  
And now my heart is sore.  
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,  
The first time on this shore,  
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,  
Trode with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,  
They paddle in the cold, 20  
Companionable streams or climb the air ;  
Their hearts have not grown old ;  
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,  
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water  
Mysterious, beautiful ;  
Among what rushes will they build,  
By what lake's edge or pool  
Delight men's eyes when I awake some day  
To find they have flown away ? 30

W. B. YEATS

## THE HERON

## THE HERON

THE fresh wet wind and the wide glittering light  
Are over now, and everything is night ;  
The barges, the great bustle, the clink of tools  
Have left no impress on the river-pools ;  
And reedy desolation edged with rose  
Resumes untroubled its antique repose,  
And curved against it, in unstirring sedge,  
A lonely heron bills the water's edge,  
Like Thought himself on his worn elbow leaning  
And probing fathom on fathom for a meaning—  
So still in Time's unwearying flow, he seems 11  
The first that haunted ruined Academes,  
The very bird that dared to dip his bill  
In Memphian pylons crumbling to the swill,  
The first of fishers, who is fishing still. . . .

Then the wave quivers with a rod of gold  
Intruding fiercely on the heron's hold  
From the near city's Babylonian strife.  
The commentator on the fringe of life  
Lifts his loose body in the misty rain ; 20  
Long-legged, fastidious in high disdain,  
He swoops to duskier reaches, dims to ghost  
In that Nirvana where all time is lost. . . .

How easy was that sweep, how eloquent  
Its cool patrician scorn of man's intent ;  
Sure as the angel's poise in Exodus,  
Whispering, " The first-born of your cities thus  
Amid their clamour knew the night, and ceased  
Swift as the passage of my wing released "—  
And in that mocking cry what visions breed 30  
Of all our cities flowering back to reed.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### STORMCOCK IN ELDER

IN my dark hermitage, aloof  
From the world's sight and the world's sound,  
By the small door where the old roof  
Hangs but five feet above the ground,  
I groped along the shelf for bread  
But found celestial food instead :

For suddenly close at my ear,  
Loud, loud and wild, with wintry glee,  
The old unfailing chorister  
Burst out in pride of poetry ;  
And through the broken roof I spied  
Him by his singing glorified.

10

Scarcely an arm's-length from the eye,  
Myself unseen, I saw him there ;  
The throbbing throat that made the cry,  
The breast dewed from the misty air,  
The polished bill that opened wide  
And showed the pointed tongue inside :

The large eye, ringed with many a ray  
Of minion feathers, finely laid ;  
The feet that grasped the elder-spray ;  
How strongly used, how subtly made,  
The scale, the sinew, and the claw,  
Plain through the broken roof I saw ;

20

The flight-feathers in tail and wing,  
The shorter coverts, and the white  
Merged into russet, marrying  
The bright breast to the pinions bright,  
Gold sequins, spots of chestnut, shower  
Of silver, like a brindled flower.

30

## CONUNDRUM

Soldier of fortune, north-west Jack,  
Old hard-times' braggart, there you blow !  
But tell me ere your bagpipes crack  
How you can make so brave a show,  
Full-fed in February, and dressed  
Like a rich merchant at a feast.

One-half the world, or so they say,  
Knows not how half the world may live ;  
So sing your song and go your way,  
And still in February contrive  
As bright as Gabriel to smile  
On elder-spray by broken tile.

RUTH PITTER

## CONUNDRUM

THE rooks, once grave as lawyers  
Disputing winter's case,  
Suddenly clown and antic  
And drive bare elm-tops frantic,  
A riot in blue space—  
The rooks, once grave as lawyers,  
New-gowned or grave top-sawyers,  
Run wild in steeplechase.

20

Each March this wild-fire folly  
Sweeps Rookland, rocks the glade ;  
Yet augur, bard, and prophet  
Knew not the reason of it  
When Rome was yet unmade—  
Why birds of melancholy  
Should dance in wild-fire folly  
Because one stick was laid.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Pythagoras, holy Moses,  
Merlin, and Numa too,  
While swiftly leapt the seasons  
Have racked their brains for reasons  
Till lip and nose went blue ;  
Pythagoras, holy Moses  
Have stroked their learned noses  
For nothing. Why should you ?

Let others ransack bookland  
To square the circle, find  
In regions four-dimensional  
Why rooks turn unconventional  
Just at a whim of wind ;  
Let others ransack bookland,  
I take my joy with Rookland  
And leave it undefined.

10

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

## THE REDSHANKS

DRIVE on, sharp wings, and cry above  
Not contemplating life or love,  
Or war or death : a winter flight  
Impartial to our human plight.

20

I below shall still remain  
On solid earth, with fear and pain ,  
Doubt, and act, and nervous strive,  
As best I may, to keep alive.

What useless dream, a hope to sail  
Down the wide, transparent gale,  
Until, insentient, I shall be  
As gaseous a transparency.

## TWILIGHT THRUSH

What useless dream, a hope to wring  
Comfort from a migrant wing :  
Human or beast, between us set  
The incommunicable net.

Parallel, yet separate,  
The languages we mistranslate,  
And knowledge seems no less absurd  
If of a mistress, or a bird.

JULIAN BELL

## TWILIGHT THRUSH

THE python clouds coiled overhead,  
Grim sunset eyed the sallow marsh,  
The stream sighed in its stealthy bed,  
All else hung silent, hopeless, harsh.

When startingly on a sturdy trill  
A thrush's resolute song rang out  
As if to rally the world's will  
By fluting in the face of doubt.

If That which did mankind create  
To solace Its dry heart with mirth  
Had suddenly grown satiate  
And glanced with pity on the earth, 20

I scarce had known amaze more rude  
Than in that spot and in that hour  
To hear the praise of fortitude  
Hymned in despite of doomfall's lour.

High on the thorn, against the gloom  
I spied him perched : a strange, pale star—  
Voice of true valour under doom !  
Spirit of friend slaughtered in war !

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Brother ! Staunch voice !—you bid me guess  
How much of comfort courage knows  
In its own sense of blessedness  
And the song blessedness bestows.

ROBERT NICHOLS

## MOTHS

Now with a humming from the greening skies,  
Sphinx moths with course set true  
Shoot forth, torpedoes with a spinning screw,  
And bulbous lantern eyes.

Now hanging round the trumpet of the flowers  
The Death's Head, hairy, squeaking as he comes, 10  
A squeal of bagpipes and a blur of drums,  
Seeks his black food, the Deadly Nightshade ; scours  
The garden like a vampire after prey,  
And failing fades, an air machine, away.

Now those small moths that in their infancy  
Feed on the wild sea spurge,  
Growing above the surge  
That creams the slate slabs of the Cornish sea,  
Come for the honeysuckles swinging loose  
On the brick summer house ; 20  
And Leopard Moths that feed upon the spindles  
And lilac-bark in spring,  
With dark-blue spots upon a wedge-like wing,  
Loving the lights, flying to cottage candles ;  
The Ghost Swift moth that feigns  
Death in the capturers' net, with such deep arts ;  
And Gipsies horned and lean, straight showers of  
darts ;  
Dark Dagger from the plains ;  
And sweet Peach Blossom feeding on the brambles ;



## MOTHS

The small coquettish Puss ;  
And that great blunderbuss  
That bumps on homing farmers and down drumbles  
On footpaths through the midnight fields of May.  
Blue moths that seek chalk hills above the leas,  
And Scarlet Tigers in the apple-trees,  
These are the moths that linger on the day.

But others will seek out the darkest hours,  
To make their drunkard onslaught on the flowers ;  
Drab, stout, like little mice 10  
Scampering after rice.  
Fen moths that feed  
On parsley, wild angelica, lucerne,  
Companions of newt and leech and hern.  
And Mottled Rustics that love teazel weed ;  
Waved Umber moth that in the forks of pears  
Spins its soft silk cocoon,  
Breaking to wing in the short nights of June  
To feast upon dog roses and sweet briars ;  
The moth named Phoenix, symbol of the rest, 20  
For all their brood  
Were grubs that bred their beauty in a wood,  
Freedom made manifest :  
A faith assured hailed glorious in a husk,  
Seen as a whirl of wings and windy lights,  
On hills, in hollows of soft earthly nights ;  
Ardent adventurers across the dusk,  
That fly, fanatics freed, and reach a bed  
Where above tapers tall  
A dead man's shadow dances on a wall, 30  
And shower their burning faiths about his head.

For they must travel far ;  
Out of the spreading south Spring Usher blew ;  
Tattered beside him flew  
The Chinese Character, the Cinnabar ;

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

The Brindled Pug, and the small Seraphim  
Blew in with butterflies  
Out of the tropic skies ;  
Sea-going beauties, that will lightly skim  
Around the crow's-nest, or the baking brasses,  
Telling the sailor of the coastal walk,  
Harebells on slopes of chalk,  
Stillness of quaking grasses ;  
That will not rest, but wearily take flight  
Into the ocean night ;  
Or taking passage on an old tea clipper,  
Seek hiding in the sails, and finding this,  
Work round to England as a chrysalis :  
The Painted Lady with the Dingy Skipper.

10

And many with wide wing and lustrous name  
Blew once, in early times, across the sea :  
Paphia, Silver Washed Fritillary,  
And that imperial dame  
Vanessa Atalanta, who was borne  
In sunny splendour on an off-shore gale  
From coasts of Africa, to meet the hail  
Battering the Kentish pebbles in the dawn.

20

DOROTHY WELLESLEY

## THE MARCH BEE

A WARNING wind finds out my resting-place  
And in a mountain cloud the lost sun chills ;  
Night comes ; and yet before she shows her face  
The sun flings off the shadows, warm light fills  
The valley and the clearings on the hills.  
Bleak crow the moorcocks on the fen's blue plashes,  
But here I warm myself with these bright looks and  
flashes.

## FABLE

And warmed like me the merry humble-bee  
Puts fears aside, runs forth to catch the sun,  
And by the ploughland's shoulder comes to see  
The flowers that like him best, and seems to shun  
Cold countless quaking wind-flowers everyone,  
Primroses too ; but makes poor grass his choice  
Where small wood-strawberry blossoms nestle and  
rejoice.

The magpies steering round from wood to wood,  
Tree-creeper flickering up the elm's green rind,  
Bold gnats that revel round my solitude 10  
And most this pleasant bee intent to find  
The new-born joy, inveigle the rich mind  
Long after darkness comes cold-lipped to one  
Still listening to the bee, still basking in the sun.  
EDMUND BLUNDEN

## FABLE

WHERE the white lane meets with the green  
The year's first butterflies are seen ;  
Here settling upon leaf or stone,  
They spread their colours in the sun.

This is the chosen trysting place  
Of butterflies' whole painted race ; 20  
Hither the gentle, favouring wind  
Of spring shall bring to each his kind.

See, ever full of hope and love,  
The basker leap to her above  
At the first brushing of her shadow—  
Over the hedge, across the meadow !

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

But ah, how fortune mocks delight !  
The tortoiseshell pursues the white,  
The yellow brimstone tracks the shade,  
Zig-zag, the splendid peacock made.

Swiftly the fair day droops and dies  
Above unmated butterflies ;  
Again, again, and yet again,  
Comes the wrong lover down the lane.

Though still deceived they still return  
To wait, to hope, perchance to mourn :— 10  
Alas ! poor fools, how must they rue  
Who but a flickering shade pursue !

Happier we and wiser far  
Than these misguided insects are,  
For whom both love and life are lost  
At the first touch of evening frost.

SYLVIA LYND

## WHAT WAS SOLOMON'S MIND ?

WHAT was Solomon's mind ?  
If he was wise in truth,  
'Twas something hard to find  
And delicate : a mouse 20  
Tingling, and small, and smooth,  
Hid in vast haunted house.

By smallness quite beset—  
Stillest when most alive—  
Shrinking to smaller yet  
And livelier, until,  
Gladly diminutive,  
Still smoother, and more still,

## DIMENSIONAL

He centres to an Eye,  
A clean expectancy,  
That, from the narrow black  
Safe velvet of his crack,  
Quivering, quiet, dumb,  
Drinks up the lighted room.

GEOFFREY SCOTT

## DIMENSIONAL

WE have tried this in three ways.  
(What are the three dimensions called? Birth,  
marriage and death?) Well what of the fourth?  
What is the charade that the sunflower plays 10  
with her splay green foot in the earth  
and her heart for ever denying the comfortable North?  
What is the use, tall stranger, of your South,  
you cannot reach it however your gilded circle  
twists with that distant unconvincing star.  
Better accept the bee that grumbles at your mouth,  
better be groundling, and obediently sparkle  
humbly in greeting to your uncelestial Lar—  
the little god of the gardens, who never plunges  
into the formless sky, who does not ravish 20  
cloud with his pirate stem, who does not claim  
that his gold claws are in the perilous flanges  
of the brazen doors of worship. Be slavish,  
sunflower; take a new and earthly name.  
Still we have tried three ways. The fourth defies us.  
Though the brain burst, though the heart split  
asunder  
shall we be patient? Shall we stand idle?  
The little soul—our timid shadow—denies us.  
We will deny our soul and slipping under  
flow out into the darkness that is tidal. 30

HUMBERT WOLFE

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### RIBH CONSIDERS CHRISTIAN LOVE INSUFFICIENT

WHY should I seek for love or study it ?  
It is of God and passes human wit ;  
I study hatred with great diligence,  
For that's a passion in my own control,  
A sort of besom that can clear the soul  
Of everything that is not mind or sense.

Why do I hate man, woman or event ?  
That is a light my jealous soul has sent.  
From terror and deception freed it can  
Discover impurities, can show at last 10  
How soul may walk when all such things are past,  
How soul could walk before such things began.

Then my delivered soul herself shall learn  
A darker knowledge and in hatred turn  
From every thought of God mankind has had.  
Thought is a garment and the soul's a bride  
That cannot in that trash and tinsel hide :  
Hatred of God may bring the soul to God.

At stroke of midnight soul cannot endure  
A bodily or mental furniture. 20  
What can she take until her Master give !  
Where can she look until He make the show !  
What can she know until He bid her know !  
How can she live till in her blood He live !

W. B. YEATS

### RED SKY AT MORNING

I DREW the blind on Christmas Morn.  
The sky was one wild riot of red.  
Its glory told me Christ was born,  
Yet filled my soul with dread.

## LEARNING TO TALK

Against the dawn's too radiant light,  
There stood a solitary Tree.  
Its naked arms were black as night,  
And grim with prophecy.

GILBERT THOMAS

## LEARNING TO TALK

SEE this small one, tiptoe on  
The green foothills of the years,  
Views a younger world than yours ;  
When you go down, he'll be the tall one.

Dawn's dew is on his tongue—  
No word for what's behind the sky,  
Naming all that meets the eye,  
Pleased with sunlight over a lawn.

16

Hear his laughter. He can't contain  
The exquisite moment overflowing.  
Limbs leaping, woodpecker flying  
Are for him and not hereafter.

Tongue trips, recovers, triumphs,  
Turning all ways to express  
What the forward eye can guess—  
That time is his and earth young.

20

We are growing too like trees  
To give the rising wind a voice :  
Eagles shall build upon our verse,  
Our winged seeds are to-morrow's sowing.

Yes, we learn to speak for all  
Whose hearts here are not at home,  
All who march to a better time  
And breed the world for which they burn.



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Though we fall once, though we often,  
Though we fall to rise not again,  
From our horizon sons begin ;  
When we go down, they will be tall ones.

C. DAY LEWIS

## INTIMATIONS

### I

THE steady candle in my hand,  
often, a child, I used to stand  
before the looking-glass and stare  
on my own face reflected there.

Bright  
the flame 10  
lit the pale image in its gilded frame ;  
behind me all the mirrored room,  
ceiling and walls, drew back in gloom  
and left me, as it were,  
alone with my own self and all the vast of night.

And as I looked, the features of my face  
grew strange to me : as when a word,  
too often spoken, often heard,  
decays 20  
from living speech to a dead sound ;  
and as I watched, spellbound,  
a crowding terror shook me : What, thought I,  
if suddenly  
those staring eyes of mine should show  
a meaning that I do not know ?  
if I should trace  
another countenance that, line by line,  
grew slowly in the place of mine ?  
and what, O God ! if I should hear  
those lips, so white, so fixed in fear, 30  
speak ?

## INTIMATIONS

Then, with a shriek  
that rang through all the silent house, I fled,  
hands over eyes, with crouching head,  
sobbing and wild and blind,  
down the long corridor, down the stair,  
into the garden-darkness . . . anywhere,  
so I could leave behind  
that room—my room—and its strange Occupant  
for ever !

### II

10

I am a man, and do not want  
the pride of man—but never  
dare I walk alone at night  
bare-headed when the stars are close and bright :  
though I love beauty, and by far  
the loveliest thing in nature is a star.  
What of all things imagined, seen,  
so pure, so passionless-serene,  
from malice so remote ?  
yet each  
of all the points of myriad light  
becomes for me an Algol as I look—  
the skies, no skies : a seven-sealèd book—  
and the space-figures, bright Orion,  
Eagle and Dragon, Bear and Lion,  
fiery signs of hieroglyph.

20

“ Day unto day uttereth speech . . . ”

What if  
the whole night spoke ?  
what if the cyclic stars forsook  
their serene orbits ? broke  
that order which is heaven's first law ? what if  
they moved, regrouped themselves, and wrote,  
gigantic on the dark above my head,  
some dread  
intelligible word ?

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

As Dante, in the Sphere of Jove,  
beheld the singing spirits move,  
regroup themselves, and blaze : a Speaking Bird ?

I am a man and given to love  
of all things lovely ; nevertheless  
—and unashamed  
I make confession—I dare not face  
the golden alphabets of space,  
lest on my mind  
God's total meaning in an instant flamed . . . 10  
for O the terror that treads close behind  
the trailing mantle of all loveliness !

### III

It was a river and a boat thereon ;  
I  
lay at my ease and stared at the bright sky,  
where, far away, one white cloud shone.

There was no sound save the soft dip of oar  
and the soft ripple by the reeded shore ;  
no sound—save of the wind that blew  
through the calm poplar-trees that grew 20  
on either side the river ; left and right  
their summits brushed the edges of my sight,  
leaving the sky between a shining avenue.

The wind—only the wind : I knew  
by long persuasion every tone of it :  
I knew its flutes, I knew its strings,  
its drums, its trumpets—knew its glee,  
its love and homeless misery ;  
and, more than all, the infinite  
far fury of its million wings 30  
abroad upon the moorland and the sea.

## INTIMATIONS

Only the wind—the wind in summer mood :  
and Fancy, were she minded, might  
invent man-words for wind-delight  
and claim she understood.

Only the wind. Then, as I listened there,  
the music changed its character—  
not Nature's now, nor did I need invent :  
I heard

as if ten thousand voices quired in air  
with tunes distinct, articulate word ;  
while many a keen aërial instrument  
—not timbrel, pipe nor harp—

10

sent

in flashing swift accompaniment  
west of wild glory through the singing's warp.  
Not Fancy's work, nor Sleep's—for I  
sat broad awake and listened : low and high  
ranged the choric harmony  
beyond conceiving lovely. Yet no string  
was ever set by finger quivering  
to sounds so strange : no tube was ever blown,  
this side the gate of Heaven, to so sweet tone :  
out of no human lips or throats  
did ever come such words, such notes !

20

They plunged precipitously down and trod  
triumphant the profoundest ground of things ;  
they climbed the very height of heights,  
and with their wings  
made winds about the face of God ;  
and keep just time, yet not such time  
as human numbers scan ;  
and ran in scales and met sublime  
in chords unknown to man.

30

I understood them not, yet knew that they  
caught in their nets such passions, such delights,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

as pass all love's, all faith's imaginings ;  
I understood them not, yet heard  
their strophic parallels,  
and, word to chanted word,  
the planetary verses clash in rime . . .  
far away  
echoed their beauty, like the fainting chime  
of visionary bells.

Such notes, such words as never human tongue  
has shaped in air ! such words, maybe, 10  
as once announced a King's nativity ;  
such notes, maybe, as once were sung  
when the last Fiat of Creation swept along  
in mute reverberations startling space,  
and all the young  
stars of the morning cried His praise  
shouting aloud in simultaneous song.

And then, once more,  
'twas but the wind that blew  
gently in the poplar-trees ; I knew, 20  
once more,  
the ripple by the receded shore  
and the soft dip of oar.

### IV

But O how near  
that Other Life to this !  
I go in daily hope, in daily fear :  
when shall I see ? when shall I hear ?  
For all this world is but a mist  
that hides the lip of the supreme Abyss,  
and all things that exist 30  
the Metaphor of Being. When shall I  
see the thing meant in the thing seen,  
and know what ocean, earth and sky,  
what living and what dying mean ?

## ETAIN

In daily hope, in daily fear I go.  
When, with a hushed premonitory shock,  
shall I hear Echo from her wooded rock  
cry back a name I did not cry ?  
or run to meet my friend—  
to meet, upon my running's end,  
one whom I never knew—whom yet I know  
more nearly than the beating of my heart ?  
When will the rounded hill, the hollow dale,  
the solid mountain sweeping to its snow,  
grow flat and tremble like a veil . . .  
and like the temple-curtain suddenly  
be rent apart  
to show . . .

10

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard !  
And thinking hath no thought and speech no word !  
And I . . . ?  
In daily fear, in daily hope I go.

J. REDWOOD ANDERSON

## ETAIN

SHE has come from far,  
From the Kingdom that must lie  
Buried deep beneath the hill,  
Shadowed by the evening star ;  
Bending last year's bracken by  
A bitter hour she shall fulfil ;  
Cannot the hazel help her  
And the willow,  
Or the bank that is her pillow  
With its green leaf of goodwill ?

20

She has not far to go  
To the Kingdom that must lie

30

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

Buried underneath the hill,  
Shadowed in the evening glow;  
(Who can pass those portals by?)  
She shall dream and dream her fill;  
The hazel bough shall help her  
    And the willow,  
And the bank that is her pillow  
With its green leaf of goodwill.

NORA K. McCAUSLAND

## THE CREDITOR

THE quietude of a soft wind  
Will not rescind  
My debts to God, but gentle-skinned  
His finger probes. I lull myself  
In quiet in diet in riot in dreams,  
In dopes in drams in drums in dreams  
Till God retire and the door shut.  
But  
Now I am left in the fire-blaze  
The peacefulness of the fire-blaze  
Will not erase  
My debts to God for His mind strays  
Over and under and all ways  
All days and always.

10

20

LOUIS MACNEICE

## AGE GOTHIQUE DORÉ

KING RICHARD in his garden walks royal,  
His mantle green being wrought with scarlet flowers,  
His hand holding a coloured book of hours,  
His coat all gold, gilden his feet withal.



## THE TRINKETS

King Richard walks in his garden by Thames-side,  
Hearing the bells of High Westminster ring,  
And the sound of the chant of the monks echoing,  
Singing each in his stall to God Crucified.  
Golden the sun descends beyond Thames-water,  
Golden flash out London steeples and spires,  
Their vanes burn and turn in the day's last fires.  
About the King the flowers of the garden fade,  
And in star-light he walks on, yet lonelier,  
His heart being filled with the peace of the Mother  
Maid. . . .

10

WILFRED ROWLAND CHILDE

## VALE

THIS was the heavenly hiding-place  
Wherein the spirit laughed a day.  
All its proud ivories and fires  
Shrunk to a shovelful of clay.

It must have love, this silent earth,  
To leap up at the King's desire,  
Moving in such a noble dance  
Of wreathèd ivory and fire.

It will not stir for me at all,  
Nor answer me with voice or gleam. 20  
Adieu, sweet-memored dust, I go  
After the Master for His dream.

"A.E."

## THE TRINKETS

A WANDERING world of rivers,  
A wavering world of trees,  
If the world grow dim and dizzy  
With all changes and degrees,

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

It is but Our Lady's mirror  
Hung dreaming in its place,  
Shining with only shadows  
Till she wakes it with her face.

The standing whirlpool of the stars,  
The wheel of all the world,  
Is a ring on Our Lady's finger  
With the suns and moons empearled  
With stars for stones to please her  
Who sits playing with her rings 10  
With the great heart that a woman has  
And the love of little things.

Wings of the whirlwind of the world  
From here to Ispahan,  
Spurning the flying forests,  
Are light as Our Lady's fan :  
For all things violent here and vain  
Lie open and all at ease  
Where God has girded heaven to guard  
Her holy vanities. 20

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

## WAR-SONG OF THE ANGELS

BLOW the slow horns through the courts of Heaven  
So the sound wanders among the clouds  
Whose giant breasts slowly turn to the moon  
Or flock in wild silence past the seven  
Fixed stars that their own light shrouds !

Blow the clear horns while our ranks stream slowly  
Falling with furled wings through the hush,  
With faces colder than moonlight shining  
Through the dim clouds ; and now the holy  
Banners strain in the comets' rush ! 30



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

“ To some has been given honour and riches,  
Wealth of earth, strong sinew and power ;  
But I have remembered my servant in the lean  
ditches

Even unto this blind hour.

Therefore rage not, chafe not, doubt not ;  
You do wrong to feed your ire,  
For I have given you an old song made new,  
I have given you my heart's fire.

“ Come unto Me all ye that labour,  
Come unto Me and have rest, 10  
Lay your head upon My starry tabor  
And the celestial darkness of My breast.  
Lean, rest, and be rocked upon Me  
That the wind blow unto you of My ruth ;  
For I set My desire upon you  
When you bit the bane of Truth.

“ Truth is a poison unto the slack veins,  
And a searing wildness to the soft eyes ;  
He that finds it shall be cut off,  
And his breast torn with sighs. 20  
For I see it not as the world sees it ;  
Men fear it and flee.  
Come unto Me all ye that have seen it,  
Come unto Me.

“ Now are the days of darkness upon men,  
There is no certainty in things done,  
And the moon, a buckler of desolation,  
Is a seduction unto the sun.  
The stars fight in the lunar spaces ;  
The gnarled waves devour their sea. 30  
Come unto Me all ye that are heavy laden,  
Come unto Me.

## THROUGH CURTAINS OF DARKNESS

“ For he that finds Truth shall be shaken ;  
Demons shall stand at his ears ;  
Pride shall assail and cleave him ;  
He shall be thrust through with spears.  
Therefore twist not, contort not, darken not  
When you lift up your lyre.  
For Truth was given unto the angels ;  
And they are melody and fire.”

HERBERT PALMER

**DATE LOANED**

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## NOTES TO THE POEMS

### *Second Interlude.*

- P. 1. This interlude was written to be spoken before the choric play, "Ardvorlich's Wife," when it had its first performance in John Masefield's garden-theatre at the Boars Hill Festival of Spoken Poetry on July 25, 1929.
- P. 2, l. 9. *Modishness* : following the mode or prevailing fashion.
- P. 3, l. 1. *Externe* : external.
- l. 6. *An inmost essence of loveliness* : Compare Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Vision of the Poets," stanza 98 :  
"God's prophets of the Beautiful  
These Poets were."

### *Unconquerable.*

- P. 3, l. 7. *Homer* : the poet to whom is assigned by very ancient tradition the authorship of the two epic poems, the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey." The tradition is that in his old age he was blind and poor. There is doubt as to both his birthplace and his date, the latter being variously placed between 1050 and 850 B.C. Seven cities claimed to be his birthplace.

*Milton blind* : John Milton (1608-1674), the great English epic poet. By May 1652 he was totally blind. He dictated "Paradise Lost" to his daughters, who were impatient of the restraints and employments his blindness imposed upon them.

*Beethoven deaf* : Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), a celebrated German composer of Dutch descent. In 1802 he wrote of the horrible dread he felt of his growing deafness, which would incapacitate him for the enjoyment both of society and of his beloved art. This deafness in time became so complete that, although he still played and conducted, he heard nothing of music. His finest works were composed after he had lost the power of enjoying them.



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

- l. 8. *Collins mad* : William Collins (1721-1759), the poet. He led a life of privation, which, coupled with drinking habits, brought on a nervous disease that ended in insanity.

*Savage famishing* : Richard Savage (1698?-1743), author of a few second-rate poems and plays. He owes his literary fame to the "Life" that Dr. Johnson wrote. His life was disreputable and he abused the charity of his friends. He was condemned to death in 1727 for killing a gentleman in a tavern brawl, but he was pardoned. During his last years he lived on a pension allowed him by Pope and finally died miserably in a debtors' prison.

- l. 9. *Marlowe* : Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), poet and dramatist. His plays include "Dr. Faustus," "Tamburlaine the Great," and "Edward II." He was killed in a drunken brawl in a Deptford tavern and was buried in the churchyard of St. Nicholas at Deptford.

- l. 10. *Chatterton* : Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), a poet, born in Bristol, famous for his precocity and literary impostures. The Rowley Poems were written by Chatterton and attributed by him to a mythical Thomas Rowley, a priest of the fifteenth century. He came to London, where he lived in a garret and wrote many verses, including the "Excelente Balade of Charitie." His penniless condition rendered him desperate and he poisoned himself with arsenic.

- l. 11. *Witless* : unconscious, unaware.

- l. 19. *Cæsars* : autocrats, emperors.

P. 4, l. 3. *Bicker* : flash, quiver, glisten.

### *Prologue.*

P. 4. See the note to "Second Interlude," P. 1.

- ll. 6-7 See St. John I, i. : "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

### *The Birthright.*

P. 8, l. 5. *Diamond* : first brought to Europe from the East. Golconda, in India, now in ruins, was a celebrated diamond mart. Now the most important diamond fields are those of Kimberley, South Africa. Diamonds are cut and polished in Holland, Amsterdam being the headquarters.



## NOTES TO THE POEMS

- l. 9. *Rubies* : The ruby is a very rare and valuable precious stone of a colour varying from deep crimson or purple to pale rose-red. The ancients believed the ruby to be an antidote to poison, to preserve persons from plague, to banish grief, and to divert the mind from evil thoughts.
- l. 11. *Emerald* : a precious stone of bright green colour.
- l. 12. *Sapphires* : precious stones of a beautiful transparent blue.
- l. 13. *Pearl* : a nacreous concretion formed within the shell of various bivalve molluscs around some foreign body, for example, a grain of sand ; it is of hard, smooth texture and of various colours, usually white or bluish-grey. It often has a beautiful lustre and is hence prized as a gem. Ancient fisheries are in the Gulf of Manar, Ceylon, and in the Persian Gulf.
- l. 15. *Turkis* : turquoise ; so named as coming from Turkistan, where first found, or through the Turkish dominions. A precious stone found in Persia, of a sky-blue to apple-green colour. Sundry virtues are attached to it : it indicates by its hue the state of the wearer's health, it indicates by its change of lustre if any peril awaits the wearer, it arouses love. Compare Milton's "Comus," ll. 893-894 : "The azure sheen of turkis blue."
- With charms y-writ* : written, engraved, with magic spells. The turquoise was supposed to possess talismanic properties.
- l. 20. *Amulet* : anything worn, generally round the neck, as a charm against evil, disease, witchcraft, etc.
- l. 22. *Garner* : store or deposit, as in a granary.

### *On Memory.*

- P. 10, l. 1. *Atlantis* : an ancient mythical island in the Atlantic Ocean, west of the Straits of Gibraltar, referred to by Plato in the "Timæus" and by other ancient writers, which with its inhabitants is said to have disappeared in a convulsion of nature. It is probably only a Greek form of the Celtic "Island of the Dead" always placed in the Western Ocean. A beautiful and prosperous country, the seat of an empire which dominated part of Europe and Africa. Owing to the impiety of its inhabitants it was swallowed up by the sea. Compare John Masefield's "Fragments" :—

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“ In some green island of the sea,  
Where now the shadowy coral grows,  
In pride and pomp and empery  
The courts of old Atlantis rose ” ;

and

“ The Atlanteans have not died,  
Immortal things still give us dream ” ;  
and Gordon Bottomley’s “ The Poets of Atlantis.”

### *Meru.*

P. 10. In Hindu mythology, the fabulous central mountain of the earth, of prodigious size and precious material, having on its summit the abode of the gods—a perfect paradise. Actually, a mountain in the land of the Masai, Tanganyika, Africa.

P. 11, l. 6. *Egypt, Greece, Rome* : great civilizations and empires of the past.

### *Civilization.*

P. 11, l. 13. *Babylon* : seat of the great Asiatic Empire of the Chaldees. Situated on the Euphrates. Sloping towards the river were the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders. Nebuchadnezzar took great pride in its buildings and under him it attained its greatest magnificence and splendour. Great damage was done by Persian conquests.

l. 19. *Gossamer threads* : the fine filmy substance consisting of cobwebs spun by small spiders, which seem floating in the air, especially in autumn, or spread over a grassy surface.

l. 25. *Corylande* : an imaginary pastoral country, a landscape suggesting spiritual peace.

### *Continuity.*

P. 12, l. 25. *Ulysses* : Odysseus, son of the King of Ithaca. When Helen was carried off to Troy, Odysseus joined the other Greek princes in the expedition to recover her. He figures prominently in the “ Iliad.” His adventures on his way home from Ithaca to Troy are related in the “ Odyssey.” Tennyson, in a dramatic monologue, “ Ulysses,” presents him setting out in his last years “ to sail beyond the sunset.”

### *Heraldry.*

P. 13. The term “ heraldry ” is now almost invariably applied to the science of armorial bearings. We find

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evidences of the use of some badge or sign to mark off a tribe, family, or individual in the earliest days and in all parts of the world. In spite of this, Heraldry, in its restricted sense of hereditary armorial symbols, was established only in the twelfth century and spread rapidly throughout Europe.

- l. 4. *Dragon's burning eye* : The dragon is a mythical monster, part serpent, part crocodile, with strong claws and a scaly skin ; it is generally represented with wings, and sometimes as breathing out fire. The heraldic dragon combines reptilian and mammalian form with the addition of wings. Among the ancient Britons and Welsh the dragon was the national symbol on the war standard ; hence the term Pendragon for the leader in war (Pen means head or chief).

### *In the Caves of Auvergne.*

- P. 13. Auvergne was formerly a province of France, corresponding to the departments of Cantal and Puy-de-Dôme. Remains of Neolithic man have been found in the central highlands, where the forest remained intact longest. The beginnings of pictorial art have been discovered there : engravings on bone and eventually carvings in relief and in the round, and larger drawings and paintings on the walls of the caves. The subjects are the animals most hunted by man reproduced with sympathy and accuracy of observation, and vigour of draughtsmanship and modelling.
- P. 14, l. 28. *Phallic* : with desire for children ; symbolical of the generative power in nature.

### *Roman Headstone.*

- P. 15. I am indebted to the author for the following note on the poem : " This poem was written near Caerleon, the Isca Silurum of the Romans, during the vacation of a soul-destroying year of drudgery. The influence upon my imagination of Arthur Machen's writings at that time was so strong that, after wandering in his native brakes, visiting the sites of villas, excavating, and attempting to decipher inscriptions, I was fully prepared to accept as a fact the improbability that one dusk I envisioned a girl's features, while standing beside a broken headstone in a particularly wild orchard, and equally ready to accept the illusion that I recognised

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their owner as Julia, the wife of a Centurion of the Second Augustan Legion. I cannot explain these things. But the poem, as I see it now, was an attempt, on a return visit to the place the same week, to lay the wraith for ever. Reading, dreaming, and memory fused suddenly in the mind to produce two stanzas and deliver me from a fantastic thrall. To this day, I have never seen a reincarnation of that face and so solved the directly apostrophised question of the last line. A further point: it seemed more natural to the mood than impertinent or presumptuous, to cite the lines that Catullus addressed to his brother. The fact that the inscription on the stone was illegible granted me a certain licence. Had I found, and adopted when revising, a reading of it from some old Monmouth antiquary, I should probably for the sake of a pedantic accuracy have introduced something alien into the lines and disharmonised spirit and mood."

P. 16, l. 5. *In perpetuum ave*: the last line of the poem, "Multas per gentes," by Catullus, perhaps the greatest of Roman lyric poets (87-54 B.C.), runs:—

"Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale."

("And to eternity, brother, hail and farewell.")

The poem was probably written at his brother's grave in the Troad as Catullus was on his way to Bithynia. Compare Tennyson's "Frater, ave atque vale":—

"There beneath the Roman ruin, where the purple  
flowers grow,  
Came that 'Ave atque vale' of the Poet's  
hopeless woe,  
Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred  
years ago."

### *A Saxon Song.*

P. 16, l. 11. *Mattock*: an agricultural tool used for loosening hard ground, grubbing up trees, etc. It has a socketed steel head, having on one side an adze-shaped blade, and sometimes on the other a kind of pick.

l. 12. *Couth*: well-known, familiar.

l. 16. *Hummock*: low hillock or knoll.

*Kame*: steep and sharp hill ridge.

*Mead*: meadow, tract of low, well-watered ground, usually near a river.

l. 17. *Byres*: cow-houses.



## NOTES TO THE POEMS

### *The Last Abbot of Gloucester.*

P. 17. An abbey was founded at Gloucester in 681, the present church being founded 1072-1104, and its first mitred abbot being appointed in 1381. Before the Reformation Gloucester Cathedral was the church of a Benedictine monastery. The fine tomb of the last abbot is referred to. The tomb was prepared for Abbot Parker (1539), whose effigy is in the Chantry, but it was occupied by two bishops. The Abbey was dissolved in 1540.

l. 3. *Disaster* : the Reformation.

l. 11. *Frankincense* : a sweet-smelling vegetable resin, used in sacrifices.

### *The Gothic Rose.*

P. 17. In Christian symbolism, the Rose, as being emblematic of a paragon or one without parallel, is peculiarly appropriated to the Virgin Mary, one of whose titles is the Mystical Rose. Here, the Gothic Rose is Christ, as the centre of the religious devotion of the Middle Ages.

l. 18. *Five-wounded Flower* : the Rose—with reference to the Five Wounds of Christ.

l. 19. *Rose of Sarras* : In the legend of the Grail, Sarras was the country to which Joseph of Arimathea fled from Jerusalem. In Tennyson's "Idylls of the King" Galahad became King of Sarras. The Grail is the platter used by Jesus at the Last Supper, in which Joseph of Arimathea received Jesus's blood at the Cross. According to one story, it was brought by Joseph to Glastonbury. The Knights of the Round Table sought the Grail and some caught a glimpse of it, but only Galahad saw it unveiled.

l. 20. *Duke of York* : Richard II's uncle, Edmund of Langley, fifth son of Edward III, 1341-1402. He became a member of the council of Regency on the accession of Richard II. See Shakespeare's "King Richard II."

l. 21. *Cardinal Beaufort* : (c. 1377-1447) born at Beaufort Castle, Anjou, died at Winchester. English prelate and statesman, natural son of John of Gaunt and half-brother of Henry IV. During the minority of Henry VI he was involved in a long contest for the ascendancy with his nephew, the Duke of Gloucester. He was president of the court that sentenced Joan of Arc to the stake.

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- l. 23. *King Richard* : King Richard II. Born at Bordeaux, 1366 ; murdered at Pontefract, 1400. King of England, 1377-1399. Son of the "Black Prince" Edward and grandson of Edward III. Overthrown by the Duke of Hereford, who became King Henry IV.

*The leopards* : lions passants gardants (walking, full-faced, and looking forward) in the Royal Standard, the King's banner of arms.

P. 18, ll. 4-5. The white rose and the red rose are the badge, emblem, or symbol of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, respectively.

- l. 6. *King of the Romans* : Richard, Earl of Cornwall (1209-1272), son of John and brother of Henry III. He was a candidate for the Crown of the Holy Roman Empire. "King of the Romans," was his title, but he never became Emperor. He founded the Cistercian Abbey of Hayles, to receive the relic of a small crystal vase containing some of the Precious Blood of Christ, brought there by Edward, Earl of Cornwall, in 1270. Richard and his son Henry were buried there.

- l. 7. *Hayles* : in East Gloucestershire. The abbey was built in the thirteenth century. Parts of the tower, some broken arches of the cloister, and the conventual barn are the only remains.

*Abbey of Saint Mary* : the ruined Benedictine Abbey at York. Founded 1089. William Etty was a native of York and is buried there. Compare P. 128, l. 7.

- l. 8. *Three-towered Eboracum* : York Minster has three towers. The Minster is the largest of English mediaeval cathedrals, and is a building of three periods of architecture. Its foundation dates from the time of the Conquest, but the edifice was destroyed by fire in 1157, and the present remains are of a church begun in 1271.

*Alas ! Poor Queen.*

P. 18, l. 9. *She* : Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587). By the death of her father, James V of Scotland, in 1542, she became Queen. On the death of Mary Tudor in 1558, Mary Stuart laid claim to the English throne. She landed from France at Leith in 1561. She married Lord Darnley in 1565. She laboured assiduously to restore the Roman Catholic faith in her kingdom. Darnley was murdered in 1567, and Mary married Bothwell, his murderer. She was seized by the lords, imprisoned in Loch Leven Castle, and compelled to

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abdicate. She escaped and fled to England. Elizabeth confined her in various castles and finally removed her to Fotheringay, and had her beheaded in 1587.

l. 14. *Dauphin* : Francis II (1544-1560). He married Mary Stuart in 1558 but died in 1560. They were educated together for ten years.

l. 15. *A triple crown* : When her husband, Francis II, succeeded to the throne in 1559, the union of the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and France seemed probable.

l. 19. *Duc de Guise* : uncle of Mary Stuart. Charles de Guise (1524-1574), Cardinal of Lorraine, prelate, diplomatist and politician. With his brother François (1519-1563), he was the leader of the Roman Catholic party against the Huguenots.

l. 22. *John Knox* : (1505-1572) Scottish reformer, statesman, and writer. In 1558 he published the first and second "Blasts of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women," directed against Mary of Guise, regent of Scotland, Mary, Queen of England, and Catharine de Medici. In 1560 Roman Catholicism was abolished by the Parliament of Scotland. On Mary Queen of Scots' return in 1561 Knox had frequent dramatic encounters with her in the struggle between her Roman Catholic sympathies and the Protestantism of her people.

P. 19, l. 1. *Liddesdale* : the romantic and beautiful valley of the Liddel, a small tributary of the Esk, in Roxburghshire, Scotland, near the English border.

*Opening Chorus for a Noah Play.*

P. 19. From the author's foreword to the Play : "It is something in the tradition of the mediaeval morality plays. The issue is the choice that must be made by Noah between clinging to his old life and trusting himself to the Flood."

l. 22. *Jurassic escarpment* : Jurassic is applied to formations belonging to the period characterised by the prevalence of oolitic (composed of grains like the eggs or roe of a fish) limestone, of which the Jura Mountains between France and Switzerland are chiefly formed. An escarpment is the abrupt face or cliff of a ridge or hill range.

l. 23. *Wind-pumps* : pumps driven by wind-wheels, which are turned by the wind to drive some mechanism.

P. 20, l. 19. *Hieroglyphs* : figures of trees, animals, etc.,



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standing for words or sounds, and forming elements of a species of writing found on ancient Egyptian monuments or records ; hence, picture-writing ; symbols or enigmatical figures.

- l. 20. *Barrows* : ancient grave-mounds, tumuli.
- l. 21. *Roman eagles* : figures of birds used as ensigns in the Roman army. One of the Roman camps on the Welsh Marches was at Viroconium or Uriconium, now Wroxeter, on the Severn, five miles east of Shrewsbury. At first perhaps (A.D. 47-65) Viroconium was a Roman legionary fortress, held by Legions XIV and XX against the Welsh hill-tribes.
- l. 22. *Combes* : coombs, deep hollows or valleys, especially on the flank of a hill.
- l. 23. *Dewponds* : shallow ponds, usually artificial, fed by the condensation of water from the air, occurring on downs having no other adequate water-supply. Compare Rudyard Kipling's "Sussex" :—

" We have no waters to delight  
Our broad and brookless vales—  
Only the dewpond on the height  
Unfed, that never fails."

*Jubilee bonfires* : the Jubilee of George V, June 7, 1935.

- P. 22, l. 5. *Willowherb* : yellow loosestrife ; its leaves resemble the willow's. Flowering in July, it is a tall upright plant growing in moist places.

*The Lane.*

- P. 23, l. 6. *Guelder* : the guelder - rose, named from Guelders (in Prussia) or Guelderland (a province of Holland) ; the snow-ball tree, with globular clusters of white flowers.

*From " Devil's Dyke."*

- P. 23. The author calls " Devil's Dyke " a dramatic poem in six tableaux, with the effect of a mediaeval altar-piece.

- P. 24, l. 4. *Smally* : in his small way.

- l. 19. *Journal* : daily, diurnal.

*The Snare.*

- P. 27, l. 28. *Bright Hector* : eldest son of Priam, King of Troy. In Homer the most prominent figure among the Trojans. He has all the highest qualities of a hero, unshaken spirit, personal courage, and wise judgment.

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### *Brook Nostalgia.*

P. 28. The author writes : " Practically every poem of mine in the Anthology contains references to mountain or moorland landscape, or to mountain rivers or brooks. I think that is a leading characteristic of my verse—the mountain and the mountain stream. And I suppose that is why I called my best book, 'Summit and Chasm.' "

P. 29, l. 1. *Alder roots* : the alder is a tree related to the birch and common in wet places.

l. 3. *Pleasuring* : taking pleasure in, delighting in.

l. 5. *Hern* : heron. Compare P. 223, "The Heron."

l. 8. *Chopine heels* : a kind of shoe raised above the ground by means of a cork sole or the like. Compare "Hamlet," II. ii. 454-455 : "Your ladyship is nearer heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine."

l. 10. *Dun-flies* : in angling, various dusky-coloured flies.

### *Familiarity.*

P. 30, l. 9. *I know not "seems"* : Compare "Hamlet," I. ii. 76 :—

"Seems, madam ! Nay, it is ; I know not 'seems.' "

### *They Will Come Back.*

P. 32, l. 15. *The slow septennial change* : the physiological change of the tissues of the human body, popularly supposed to be completed every seven years.

l. 17. *Curfew* : a regulation by which, at a fixed hour in the evening, a bell was rung as a signal that fires were to be extinguished.

l. 18. *Harvest-home* : the bringing home of the last of the harvest ; the festival to celebrate the successful homing of the corn.

l. 19. *Gentian* : a plant that grows chiefly in Alpine regions and is noted for the blue brilliance of the colouring of its flowers and its intense bitterness, which makes it of great medicinal value.

l. 21. *Provençal* : Provence is the southernmost province of France, nearest to Italy.

l. 24. *Péteret Ridge* : on Mont Blanc. On the Italian side, two Aiguilles, Péteret Blanche and Péteret Noire—breakneck peaks with overhanging precipices.

*The Eagle Nest* : a celebrated rock, about twelve hundred feet in height, among the Killarney lakes in the county of Kerry, Ireland, noted for its wonderful echoes.

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### *Orchards.*

P. 34. From "The Land," one of the outstanding poems of modern times. The spirit and the idea of it are both English and ancient. It goes back to Virgil's "Georgics" and Theocritus's "Idylls." It deals with human activity and the life of Nature.

l. 19. *Mobled* : muffled. From "Hamlet," II. ii. 533, "the mobled queen."

*Wimpled* : veiled.

l. 27. *Brindled roan* : marked with spots or streaks ; roan is used of animals with a dark coat in which the prevailing colour is thickly interspersed with some other, e.g. grey or white.

### *The Snowdrop.*

P. 38, ll. 14-17. Compare Tennyson's :—

"Little flower in the crannied wall,  
I pluck you out of the crannies ;  
Hold you here, root and all, in my hand,  
Little flower—but if I could understand  
What you are, root and all, and all in all,  
I should know what God and man is."

Compare also Francis Thompson's "All Flesh" :—

"Epitomized in thee [a grass-blade]  
Was the mystery  
Which shakes the spheres conjoint—  
God focussed to a point."

### *A Hollow Elm.*

P. 40, l. 11. *Pollard top* : the top of the tree polled or cut back, so as to produce a thick close growth of young branches, forming a rounded head or mass.

### *A Switch Cut in April.*

P. 41, l. 23. *Calyx* : the whorl of leaves (sepals), usually green, forming the outer covering of a flower while in the bud.

### *Tormented by the World.*

P. 43. This is an extract from "The Sale of St. Thomas," of which this is the tradition : "When, for the gospelling of the world, the Apostles sorted the countries among themselves, the lot of India fell to Thomas. After some hesitation he obeyed the lot, being shamed thereto by his Master." This extract comes from Act III, The

## NOTES TO THE POEMS

Slave-Shed, and is spoken by Thomas "now indeed a slave, and stall'd with slaves."

### *The Lane.*

P. 44, l. 26. *Froxfield* : East Hampshire, three miles north-west of Petersfield, where a memorial to Edward Thomas was unveiled in 1937.

P. 45, l. 2. *Halcyon* : calm, quiet, peaceful ; from the halcyon, a bird anciently fabled to breed about the time of the winter solstice, in a nest floating on the sea, and to charm the winds and waves so that the sea was then specially calm—the halcyon is usually identified with a species of kingfisher.

### *Mortality.*

P. 45, l. 12. *Stooked* : with sheaves set up in shocks, placed upright and supporting each other to permit the drying and ripening of the grain before carrying.

l. 17. *Loam* : clayey earth.

### *A Windy Day.*

P. 46, l. 4. *Bury* : burrow, hole or excavation made in the ground for a dwelling-place by rabbits, foxes, etc.

### *Snow.*

P. 48, l. 15. *Collateral* : situated or running side by side.  
*Incompatible* : incongruous, inconsistent.

### *Garnett's Garden.*

P. 52. The garden of David Garnett, the novelist.

### *To a Girl at the Seeley Library.*

P. 52. The Seeley Memorial Library is at Cambridge. It consists of works on History, Political Science, and International Law, for reference and open to undergraduates. Sir John Robert Seeley (1834–1895) was Professor of Modern History at Cambridge from 1869, and author of "The Expansion of England" (1883).

l. 20. *The Downs* : the treeless undulating chalk uplands of South and South-East England, serving chiefly for pasturage.

l. 21. *Pen-y-Pas* : Snowden. See the poem, "Penn-y-pas," by Victoria Sackville-West.

l. 22. *Cleadow* : North Durham.

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### *Oxford Revisited.*

P. 53. The poet was at Magdalen College, Oxford.

l. 4. *Isis* : The Thames is called the Isis from its source to its junction with the Thame below Oxford, owing to a false etymology of Tamesis or Tamisis as Tam + Isis.

l. 5. *Christ Church meadows* : Christ Church is a college begun by Cardinal Wolsey (it was to be called Cardinal College), and taken over after his fall and established by Henry VIII in 1546.

*Sublimate your woes* : exalt or elevate your sorrows to a high or higher state.

l. 14. *Uriel* : one of the seven archangels enumerated in the Book of Enoch. Milton ("Paradise Lost," III. 689-691) makes him "Regent of the Sun," beguiled by Satan in spite of his sharp sight. The name means "Flame of God," or "Angel of Light."

### *The Boyne Walk.*

P. 55. The Boyne is a river in County Kildare, Ireland. In 1690 a battle took place on its banks between the armies of William III and James II.

l. 15. *Strealy* : straggling.

l. 21. *Astrological* : pertaining to astrology, the application of astronomy to the prediction of events, natural and moral.

l. 22. *Don Quixote* : the knight-errant in the romance by Cervantes (1547-1616), extravagantly romantic and aiming at an impossible ideal.

*His man* : Sancho Panza, his matter-of-fact, unimaginative squire.

l. 23. *Ladder-ribbed steeds* : Don Quixote rode a lean nag, Rozinante, and Sancho Panza an ass.

l. 27. *Meath* : a county of Leinster Province, in the Irish Free State.

P. 56, l. 3. *The Joker* : of a pack of cards ; an odd card in a pack, either left blank or ornamented, used in some games, counting as a trump and sometimes as the highest trump.

l. 16. *Wattle* : a flap of skin pendent from the neck or throat.

l. 17. *Lot's wife* : Lot showed hospitality to angels and was urged by them to leave before destruction fell on Sodom and Gomorrah. He escaped with his family. His wife looked behind her and became a pillar of salt. See Genesis xix. 1-26.



## NOTES TO THE POEMS

- l. 18. *Adam's red apple* : the projection in the neck formed by the thyroid cartilage ; supposed to have been caused by a piece of the apple that stuck in Adam's throat.
- l. 29. *Daemon* : attendant spirit or genius. Compare "Antony and Cleopatra," II. iii. 19. "Thy daemon—that's thy spirit which keeps thee."
- l. 30. *Moses awaiting a light-burdened cloud* : God appeared to Moses in a thick cloud and entrusted him with the Ten Commandments. See Exodus xix. 9–25.
- P. 57, l. 21. *Swig* : a deep or copious draught.
- l. 29. *A gem from the head of a toad* : The ancients called a certain stone a toadstone, owing to its colour. In course of time the name gave rise to the belief that small stones were found in the brains of toads. Such stones were set in silver rings as amulets against poison. Compare "As You Like It," II. i. 13–14 :—  
     "The toad, ugly and venomous,  
     Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."
- l. 31. *Over the hills and far away* : from John Gay's (1688–1732) "The Beggar's Opera," I. i.

### *The Flowering Reed.*

- P. 58, l. 2. *Rhône* : the swiftest and second longest river of France. It rises in the Swiss Alps, flows into and through Lake Geneva, westward to Lyons, where it is joined by the Saône, then south to the Mediterranean, discharging by La Camargue Delta into the Gulf of Lyons.
- l. 8. *Tullia's tomb* : Tullia was the daughter of Cicero, born in 76 B.C. She was three times married. Her death in 45 B.C. threw her father into despair. Sulpicius Rufus wrote a famous letter of consolation to Cicero. Compare T. L. Peacock's "The Cypresses' Song in Ridicule of Lord Byron" from "Nightmare Abbey":—  
     "There is a fever of the spirit . . .  
     Which in the lone dark souls that bear it  
     Glows like the lamp in Tullia's tomb."
- l. 14. *Moraines* : accumulations of debris from the mountains carried down and deposited by glaciers.
- l. 18. *Scatheless* : unharmed.

### *Middle of the World.*

- P. 58. The Mediterranean Sea is so called from being, as it were, in the middle of the land of the Old World.
- l. 25. *Dionysos* : in Greek mythology, one of the gods. He is represented as accompanied by a rout of votaries,

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dancing about him, intoxicated or possessed. He was also known under the name of Bacchus, the god of wine, who loosens care and inspires to music and poetry.

- l. 26. *Grape-vines up the mast, and dolphins leaping* : an allusion to the Seventh Homeric Hymn, where Dionysos was seized and bound by pirates ; but the bonds fell off him, a vine grew about the mast, and the captive turned into a lion. The pirates in terror jumped into the sea and were transformed into dolphins.

- l. 28. *P. and O.* : (Indian) Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company.

*Orient Line* : between London and Brisbane, *via* Colombo.

- P. 59, l. 1. *Minoan* : pertaining to the prehistoric civilization of Crete (3000-1200 B.C.). Revealed by the excavations of Sir Arthur Evans at the Palace of Minos at Cnossos in Crete. The island attained to great prosperity and a dominating position in the Aegean. The early Cretans were a highly artistic people and produced works of great beauty and originality. Cnossos became the leading city in the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries B.C. and its king was the ruler of the whole island. About 1400 B.C., sudden destruction came upon the palace of Cnossos, probably as the result of an invasion from Greece. About 1200 B.C. came the further invasion of the Dorians, which destroyed any monuments of the Minoan civilization that had survived.

- l. 10. *Tiryns* : a very ancient city in the southern part of the plain of Argos, of which the huge walls are still standing. It is associated in legend with Mycenae, nine miles away, both cities losing their importance after their conquest by the Dorians. Hercules lived there for many years.

- l. 12. *Dionysos, young* : Dionysos is frequently represented as a youth of rather effeminate expression, with luxuriant hair, reposing with grapes or a wine-cup in his hand, or holding the *thyrsus*, a rod encircled with vines or ivy.

### *The Olive Tree.*

- P. 59, l. 15. *Sierra* : a range of hills or mountains rising in peaks that suggest the teeth of a saw.

- l. 18. *Laocoon* : a Trojan priest of Apollo, who, when he was offering a sacrifice to Poseidon, saw two serpents issue from the sea and attack his sons. He rushed to their defence, but the serpents wreathed themselves



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about him and crushed him. This was said to be a punishment for his temerity in dissuading the Trojans from admitting the wooden horse into Troy. The sculptured group representing these three in their death agony, now in the Vatican, was discovered in 1506 in Rome.

*Vespers on the Nile.*

P. 60. Vespers are evening prayers or devotions.

l. 1. *Ibis* : birds allied to the stork and heron, comprising many species with long legs and slender decurved bill ; especially and originally the Sacred Ibis of Egypt, with white and black plumage, an object of veneration among the ancient Egyptians.

l. 6. *Wingless warblers of the bogs* : frogs.

l. 7. *Sabbath* : midnight meeting.

l. 8. *Selenologues* : songs to the moon.

l. 11. *An ancient people* : the Jews. Oppressed in Egypt. See Exodus I. xiv.

l. 14. *Pharaoh's foreman* : at the building of the palaces and cities of the kings.

*quirt* : a riding-whip, having a short handle and a braided leather lash about two feet long.

l. 15. *Sjambok* : a strong and heavy whip made of rhinoceros and hippopotamus hide, used for driving cattle and sometimes for administering chastisement.

l. 17. *Amphionic lyre* : Amphion was the son of Zeus and Antiope. Hermes gave him a lyre on which he played with such skill that when he and his brother were fortifying Thebes, the principal city in Bœotia, the stones moved of their own accord and formed a wall. Compare Wordsworth's "On the Power of Sound" :—

"The Gift to king Amphion  
That walled a city with its melody  
Was for belief no dream."

l. 18. *Thebes* : also the Greek name of a city of Upper Egypt, on the site of which now stands the village of Luxor. It became the capital about 2000 B.C. and attained great splendour c. 1400–1100 B.C. Homer called it "hundred-gated." It is now famous for the remains of its great temples and its royal tombs.

l. 26. *Zion* : one of the hills of Jerusalem, on which the city of David was built, and which became the centre of Jewish life and worship—hence, the house of God, Israel, the Jewish religion, the Christian Church, Heaven (as here).

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P. 61, l. 6. *Heehawhallelujahs* : hallelujah is the exclamation, "Praise [ye] the Lord [the Jah, or Jehovah]," which occurs in many psalms and anthems ; hence, a song of praise to God.

*At Rhey* [*Rhages*].

P. 61, l. 7. *The Persian poet* : Maulana Jalalu 'ddin Rumi (1207-1273), the greatest mystical poet of Persia. He founded the order of Maulawi dervishes, famous for their piety as well as their garb of mourning, their music and their mystic dance. Most of Rumi's odes were composed in honour of the Maulawi dervishes, and even his masterpiece, the "Spiritual Mathnawi," a collection of ethical and moral precepts, can be traced to the same source. The quotation comes from his *Divani Shamsi Tabriz* :

"In travel, dear friend, there meet together  
The native of Marv and of Rai, the Roman and  
the Kurd.

Each one returns to his home."

(Transl. R. A. Nicholson)

Shamsi Tabriz was comparatively illiterate, but he had tremendous spiritual enthusiasm based on the conviction that he was a chosen organ and mouthpiece of the Deity. Rumi underwent complete submission to the glowing faith and imperious will of Shamsi. He renounced his teaching and retired with Shamsi to solitary and desert places, where in close communion they discussed the deepest arcana of mystical philosophy. Shamsi later vanished mysteriously. In memory of Shamsi Rumi instituted the order of Maulawi dervishes, and the *Divani* itself was written *in memoriam*.

l. 8. *Merv* : a town and oasis in Transcaspian Turkistan, Central Asia. It manufactures woollen carpets and is in the centre of the cotton district. The ancient town of Merv dated back to the time of Alexander the Great.

*Rhey* : a great city of Media, on the southern slopes of the mountains bordering the southern shore of the Caspian Sea. It was more than once destroyed, first by earthquake, then in the Parthian wars, and finally by the Tartars (1221). Its ancient name was Rhages.

*Kurd* : an inhabitant of Kurdistan, an extensive mountainous region of West Asia. Much of it is grass-covered tableland where sheep are raised in large numbers. The Kurds are turbulent and savage, and

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are notorious for their massacres of the Armenians. They are divided into large numbers of small tribes, each under an hereditary chief.

- l. 10. *Swallow* : in summer swallows range all over Europe and most of Asia. In winter they migrate south, reaching India, Burma, the Malay Peninsula and Africa.
- l. 16. *Shards* : fragments of broken earthenware, pots-herds.
- l. 19. *Darius* : Darius the Great, King of the Persians, 521-485 B.C. He greatly extended the Persian Empire, and in his reign began the great war between the Persians and the Greeks. His army was defeated at Marathon 490 B.C., and before he was able to renew the struggle he died, leaving the execution of his schemes to his son Xerxes.

*Alexander* : Alexander the Great, 356-323 B.C. Son of Philip II of Macedon. He became King of Macedon in 336 B.C. He caused the Greek states to nominate him to conduct the war against Persia, and in 334 crossed the Hellespont. He captured Darius III and his family, and extended his conquests to Egypt, where he founded Alexandria, and after completely defeating the Persians at the battle of Arbela in 331, to India.

- l. 26. *Raphael and Tobias* : See the Book of Tobit of the Apocrypha. Tobit, a Jew who has been carried captive to Nineveh, is deprived of his property by Sennacherib, and in his distress bethinks him of the ten talents of silver he has left in deposit at Rhages of Media. He sends his son Tobias to fetch them. The angel Raphael, in the guise of a fellow-countryman, accompanies the young man. They catch a fish in the Tigris and by burning its heart and liver drive out the evil spirit Asmodeus, who has destroyed the seven successive bridegrooms of Sarah, the daughter of Raguel, Tobit's kinsman. Tobias marries Sarah and acquires half Raguel's goods. The gall of the fish serves to remove the blindness with which Tobit is afflicted. The angel also recovers Tobit's deposit. He then reveals himself and exhorts Tobit and Tobias to bless God for His mercy. A modern re-telling of the story is found in Stella Benson's "Tobit Transplanted."

*Tristan da Cunha.*

P. 62. Tristan da Cunha, an extinct volcano, is the principal of a group of islets in the South Atlantic, named after the

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Portuguese navigator who discovered them in 1506. In January 1938 it was made a dependency of Saint Helena.

- l. 28. *Antaeus-like* : Antaeus was a giant, son of Poseidon and Ge (the Earth), and a mighty wrestler. Hercules attacked him, and as, whenever he was thrown, Antaeus drew new strength from contact with his mother Earth, Hercules lifted him in the air and crushed him to death.
- P. 63, l. 21. *Memnon* : the Ethiopian prince who, in the Trojan War, went to the assistance of his uncle Priam and was slain by Achilles. A tradition arose that a colossal statue near Egyptian Thebes (in reality representing King Amenophis III) was a statue of this Memnon. The musical sound that the statue gave forth when struck by the rays of the rising sun is explained as due to currents of air created in the fissures of the statue by the change of temperature.
- l. 27. *Nitre* : saltpetre, gunpowder.
- l. 30. *Tocsin* : a signal, especially an alarm signal, sounded by ringing a bell.

### *The Wanderer.*

- P. 65. "The Wanderer" was a full-rigged sailing ship, launched at Liverpool in 1891. She was run into and sunk on April 14, 1907, and was a total loss.
- l. 10. *Coultered* : cut by the iron blade (coulter) fixed in front of the share in a plough.

### *Sailor and Inland Flower.*

- P. 66, l. 3. *Sextant* : an astronomical instrument resembling a quadrant, furnished with a graduated arc equal to a sixth part of a circle, used for measuring angular distances between objects, especially for observing altitudes of celestial objects in ascertaining latitude at sea.  
*Arcturus* : a yellow star in the northern hemisphere, situated at the tail of the Great Bear, fourth in order of brightness in the entire heavens.
- l. 9. *Orion* : a mythical hunter of gigantic size and strength and of great beauty. According to one legend, for five years he pursued the seven daughters of Atlas, the Pleiades, until Zeus turned the Nymphs and their pursuer into neighbouring stars. His figure is formed by seven very bright stars, three of which, in a straight line, form his belt.

*The Lion* : Leo, the zodiacal constellation lying



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between Cancer and Virgo. According to mythology, it was originally the Nemean lion killed by Hercules.

*The Crab* : Cancer, the zodiacal constellation lying between Gemini and Leo. The sun enters Cancer on June 21.

*Betelgeuse* : the bright, red, slightly variable star in the right shoulder of the constellation Orion.

l. 12. *Milky Way* : the Galaxy, a luminous band or track, encircling the heavens irregularly, consisting of innumerable stars, perceptible only by the telescope.

l. 16. *Atlantis* : see note to P. 10, l. 1.

### *Sailing Ships.*

P. 66, l. 18. *Downs* : see note to P. 52, l. 20.

l. 19. *Kestrels* : small falcons or hawks.

l. 20. *Brindled* : marked with spots or streaks.

l. 22. *Cornish Lizard* : Lizard Head in Cornwall.

*Kentish Nore* : a sandbank in the mouth of the Thames off Sheerness ; hence, the full extent of the South Coast of England.

P. 67 l. 2. *Kempt* : neat, polished.

P. 68, l. 10. *The isles* : of the Aegean Sea ; e.g. Lemnos, Mitylene, Chios, etc.

*Thessaly* : the largest division of Greece. It is a plain almost entirely surrounded by mountains.

l. 13. *The girdle* : the Equator.

l. 14. *The Southern Cross* : a brilliant star group, seen in the southern hemisphere.

*The Bear* : the name of two constellations, the Great Bear and the Little Bear. The classical fable is that Callisto, a nymph of Diana, had a son by Jupiter. Juno changed Callisto into a she-bear, but Jupiter turned mother and son into constellations.

l. 17. *Magellan's Clouds* : Magellan (1480-1521), a Portuguese navigator, was the first European to pass through the Straits, between Tierra del Fuego and the mainland of South America, that bear his name. The Magellanic Clouds are two cloud-like condensations of stars in the southern sky. They appear in all respects like detailed portions of the Milky Way. They are very remote.

l. 23. *Bills of lading* : official dated receipts given by the master of a vessel to the person consigning goods, by which he makes himself responsible for their safe delivery to the consignee.

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- l. 25. *Jettison* : in maritime law, the action of throwing goods overboard, especially to lighten a ship in distress.

*Barratry* : in maritime law, fraud, or gross and criminal negligence on the part of the master or mariners of a ship, to the prejudice of the owners and without their consent.

- l. 26. *Perils* : of the sea ; in marine insurance, strictly, the natural accidents peculiar to the sea, but in law extended to include capture by pirates, loss by collision, etc.

*Adventures* : chances of danger or loss, risk, jeopardy.

*The Act of God* : the action of uncontrollable natural forces, e.g. hurricane, lightning, in causing an accident.

- l. 30. "*Restraint of Princes*" : an embargo, a temporary order from the Admiralty to prevent the arrival or departure of ships ; a stoppage of trade for a short time by authority. In marine insurance, when the further prosecution of the voyage is rendered hopeless by blockade, and the voyage is accordingly wholly abandoned, that is a loss by "*Restraint of Princes*" within the policy.

### *The Blue-Peter.*

- P. 69, l. 2. *Blue-peter* : a blue flag with a white square in the centre, hoisted as a signal of immediate sailing.

- l. 10. *Ingle* : a fire burning upon the hearth.

- l. 17. *Spindrift* : the spray blown from the crests of waves by a violent wind and driven continuously along the surface of the sea.

### *Docks.*

- P. 70, l. 3. *Tramps* : cargo-boats with no fixed trade route.

- l. 5. *Greenheart wood* : the name of several West Indian trees. The timber of a greenheart is very hard and is used for ship-building, etc.

- l. 6. *Lintels* : horizontal pieces of timbers.

*Clamps* : pieces of timber, iron, etc., used to fasten things together or to strengthen any framework.

- l. 7. *Quoins* : wedges or wedge-shaped blocks.

- l. 10. *Top-gallant yards* : the mast and sail next above the topmast and topsail.

*Spanker-vang* : one or other of the two ropes used for steadying the gaff of a fore-and-aft sail (spanker).

- l. 11. *Dolphin-striker* : a martingale, a short gaff spar fixed vertically under the bowsprit.

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- l. 16. *Foreshores* : the fore-part of the shore ; that part that lies between the high and low water marks.
- l. 19. *Silt* : fine sand, clay, or other soil, carried by moving or running water and deposited as a sediment on the bottom or the beach.  
*Dune* : a low hill of sand on the seashore.
- l. 20. *Neap-tides* : tides occurring after the first and the third quarter of the moon, in which the high-water level stands at its lowest point.
- l. 23. *Dry docks* : graving docks ; narrow basins into which a single vessel is received, and from which the water is then let out, leaving the vessel dry for repairing, etc.
- l. 24. *Timber-shores* : pieces of timber set obliquely against the side of a ship in dock, etc., as a support when it is in danger of falling or when undergoing alteration or repair.
- l. 25. *Prores* : prows of ships.
- l. 27. *Algae* : a division of plants, including seaweeds.  
*Mussels* : marine bivalve shellfish, used for food.
- l. 29. *Sumps* : pits or wells, sunk at the bottom of an engine shaft, to collect the water.
- l. 30. *Derricks* : cranes.
- l. 33. *Sills* : strong horizontal timber structures at the bottom of the entrance of a dock or canal-lock, against which the gates close.
- P. 71, l. 2. *Sluices of the locks* : a structure for impounding the water of a river, canal, etc., provided with adjustable gates by which the volume of water is regulated or controlled.
- l. 5. *Littoral* : of, or pertaining to, the shore.

### *Rotation.*

- P. 73, l. 4. *Primes* : a canonical hour of the Divine Office, appointed for the first hour of the day, *i.e.* 6 A.M. (or, sometimes, sunrise).

### *The Immortal Hour.*

- P. 73, l. 17. *Augustus* : Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus (63 B.C.—A.D. 14), nephew of Julius Caesar and first Roman emperor, occupying the throne from 27 B.C. The title of Augustus was conferred on him by the senate and people as a mark of their veneration. It was borne by all subsequent Roman emperors.
- l. 22. *The axes and the rod* : the *Fasces* ; in Rome, bundles



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of wooden rods, fastened together with a red strap, and enclosing an axe, the symbol originally of the king's authority, and transferred from him to the high magistrates. A consul had twelve *fascēs* carried before him by attendants called lictors.

P. 74, l. 15. *Pilate* : Roman governor, procurator of Judea, who authorised the crucifixion of Jesus. He was deposed from his office because of his severity. See St. John xviii. 38 : "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?"

*Byzantium.*

P. 74. Byzantium was a Greek city built on the eastern part of the site of Constantinople, in which it was merged in A.D. 330. At the division of the Eastern and Western Empires between his two sons on the death of Theodosius in 395, Byzantium became the capital of the Eastern Empire till 1453. Its situation was remarkable for beauty and security.

P. 75, l. 7. *Miracle, bird or golden handiwork* : "I have read somewhere that in the Emperor's palace at Byzantium was a tree made of gold and silver, and artificial birds that sang."—W. B. Yeats.

*O Love, the Interest Itself in Thoughtless Heaven.*

P. 77, l. 2. *Murmuration* : a murmuring, production of a low continuous sound.

l. 5. *Scarp* : the steep face of a hill.

l. 6. *Mole* : breakwater ; *i.e.* Britain.

l. 7. *Newton* : Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727), the philosopher. His researches on light and colours were summed up in his "Optics," 1704, to which was appended his Method of Fluxions, his great mathematical discovery. His "Principia Mathematica," embodying his laws of motion and the idea of universal gravitation (the idea of which was first suggested to Newton by the sight of an apple falling from the tree), was published in 1687. He was elected President of the Royal Society in 1703 and annually re-elected. He was buried in Westminster Abbey.

l. 17. *Dumbarton* : once a flourishing ship-building town.

l. 18. *Rowley* : in Durham.

P. 78, l. 11. *Moel Famau* : the highest point in the range of hills enclosing the Vale of Clwyd, North Denbighshire.

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- l. 13. *Ammonite* : a fossil with whorled chambered shells ; once thought to be coiled snakes petrified, and called Snake-stones.
- l. 17. *Merlin* : the enchanter and soothsayer of Arthurian legend. In Malory's " Morte d'Arthur " and Tennyson's " Idylls of the King."
- l. 18. *Stonehenge* : the great prehistoric monument on Salisbury Plain. It was probably used (if not built) by the Druids, and it is thought to have been the temple of a sun-god and to have been built about 1680 B.C.

*The Pillars* : the Pillars of Hercules ; a name given to the two mountains opposite one another at the entrance of the Mediterranean, supposed to have been parted by the arm of Hercules ; the Straits of Gibraltar.

### *In Time Like Glass.*

- P. 80, l. 5. *Cordilleras* : the parallel chains of the Andes in South America, so called originally by the Spaniards.
- l. 7. *Orchid* : a plant with a rich, showy, often fragrant flower, frequently found growing in warm countries, on rocks and stems of trees. The flowers have three sepals and three petals, and are often remarkable for brilliancy of colour or grotesqueness of form.
  - l. 9. *Himalayas* : the mountain chain forming the northern boundary of India and including Mount Everest.
  - l. 11. *Lush* : of grass, succulent and luxuriant in growth.

### *The Enigma.*

- P. 81, l. 4. *The Scorpion* : a constellation, and the eighth sign of the zodiac.

*The Crown* : two constellations, the southern and the Northern Crowns, consisting of elliptical rings of stars.

### *Looking at the Stars.*

- P. 81, l. 22. *Orion* : see note to P. 66, l. 9.

### *Shining Dark.*

- P. 83, l. 18. *Gentian* : see note to P. 32, l. 19.
- l. 20. *Calcine* : reduce by fire to a powder ; purify by consuming the greater part.
  - Amorphous* : having no determinate shape.
  - l. 21. *Substratum* : under-layer, fundamental element.
  - l. 24. *Beethoven dead* : see note to P. 3, l. 7.
  - Milton blind* : see note to P. 3, l. 7.

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1. 25. *Melville, forsaken of the valiant mind*: Herman Melville (1819-1891). Born in New York City; shipped as a sailor before the mast in 1837. In 1841 he sailed round Cape Horn in a whaler, and in 1842, owing to harsh treatment by the captain, left the ship with a comrade at Nukahura in the Marquesas. The fugitives intended to go to the friendly Happar tribe, but instead found themselves in the adjoining valley of the cannibal Typees. Here they were held in captivity for some months and finally rescued. The record of this adventure is contained in Melville's romance "Typee, a Peep at Polynesian Life" (1846). Other works are "Moby Dick" (1851), "Omoo" (1847), and "Mardi" (1849). "Moby Dick" seems to have exhausted him. "Pierre" (1852) is hopelessly frantic. Whatever the causes of his loss of power he fretted under it and grew more metaphysical. He moved restlessly about America.

### *Marina.*

- P. 89. Compare with the Marina of this poem the pure and pious Marina, the daughter of Pericles in Shakespeare's play. "The promise expressed in the poem is as tenuous as it is tender"—Babette Deutsch. (From "This Modern Poetry," by kind permission of the author and Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd.)

"Marina, the daughter of Pericles, who was lost and found again, is the symbol of the old vision of 'Ash Wednesday' transcended, expressed in more general symbolism and with greater personal intensity—the vision on the point of waking, that fraction of a second when the phantoms of sleep struggle with the realities of the room. For though the will is surrendered, the full revelation is not yet. . . . The poem is as full of the sea as 'The Waste Land' was of drought. . . . The ship that the traveller made is to be abandoned for 'the new ships.' The 'grace' of the new vision has reduced the old world with its death-values to something 'insubstantial.' The shores are in sight, the same, yet profoundly changed as the poet welcomes 'What seas. . . .' In the joy of the new discovery he does not forget what he has escaped. Those things he has made, the children of his mind, might have been dead. . . . The reward of the human duty of self-surrender is glimpsed in the poem."—Hugh Ross Williamson. (From "The Poetry of T. S.

## NOTES TO THE POEMS

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*Quis hic locus, quae regio, quae mundi plaga?* : What place is this, what country, what shore of the world?

"This is a line from Seneca's 'Hercules Furens,' recalling the awful moment when the hero, having slain his children in a fit of madness, recovers his wits and sees what he has done. Of all the epigraphs to T. S. Eliot's poems this is the most dramatic, the most skilfully chosen. And we share the poet's gratitude that he is not Hercules but Pericles."—Hugh Ross Williamson. (From "The Poetry of T. S. Eliot," by kind permission of the Author and Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd.)

P. 90, l. 19. *Garboard strake* : the strake is each of several continuous lines of planking or plates, extending from stem to stern of a ship ; the garboard is the first range of planks laid upon a ship's bottom near the keel.

*Caulking* : stopping up by driving in oakum, melted pitch being afterwards poured on to prevent leaking.

*Impermanent Creativeness.*

P. 91. "I have called this collection of poems 'Blind Fireworks' because they are artificial and yet random, because they go quickly through their antics against an impermanent background, and fall and go out quickly."—Louis MacNeice.

*Sarasvati.*

P. 92. Sarasvati is a mighty sacred river in the Punjab, personified by the ancient Hindus as the wife of Brahma and goddess of the fine arts. The river loses itself in the sands, but was fabled to become united with the Ganges and the Jumna. It protects the dwellers upon its banks, and bestows upon them blessings of every kind.

*An Impatience.*

P. 95, l. 28. *Babel tower* : the lofty structure of Genesis xi. 1-9 : "a tower whose top may reach unto heaven."

l. 30. *The five-leaved flower* : the cinque-foil, a plant with compound leaves each of five leaflets ; or the five-bladed clover.

*The Bottle.*

P. 96, l. 10. *Fluted* : grooved, channelled.

l. 13. *A simple* : a medicinal herb.

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- l. 19. *Self-heal* : any of various plants believed to have great healing properties, especially Common Self-heal or Prunella.

*Hellebore* : a name anciently given to a species reputed as specifics for mental disease.

*Aconite* : a poisonous plant, especially Monk's-hood or Wolf's-bane.

- l. 20. *Chamomile* : camomile ; a creeping herb, with downy leaves, and flowers white in the ray and yellow in the disk. The flowers are used in medicine for their bitter and tonic properties.

*Dwale* : deadly nightshade—a stupefying or soporific drink.

- P. 97, l. 3. *Ichor* : in Greek mythology, the ethereal fluid, not blood, supposed to flow in the veins of the gods.

- l. 7. *Attar* : a fragrant volatile essential oil obtained from the petals of the rose ; hence, fragrant essence.

- l. 10. *Fecundates* : renders fruitful or productive.

*Grafts* : inserts a shoot from one tree into a groove or slit made in another stock, so as to allow the sap of the latter to circulate through the former.

- l. 11. *Leechcraft* : knowledge of the art of healing, of medical science.

- l. 18. *Poppy* : a plant with a milky juice of narcotic properties, from which opium is produced.

- ll. 20–21. See, for example, De Quincey's "Confessions of an Opium-Eater."

- l. 32. *Aeons* : immeasurable periods of time, eternity.

*Grey Sand is Churnin' in my Lugs.*

- P. 98, l. 5. *Churnin'* : stirring, agitating.

*Lugs* : ears.

- l. 6. *Flets* : moves.

*Gantin'* : yawning.

- l. 8. *Rugs* : rives, tears, tugs.

*Morning.*

- P. 100, l. 8. *Iconoclastic* : assailing cherished beliefs or venerated institutions on the ground that they are erroneous or pernicious.

- l. 10. *Portobello* : Portobello Bridge, Dublin, beside which the free-lance preachers of the Gospel speak on Sunday evenings.

- l. 12. *A new straw-bodied god* : modernism.



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l. 17. *Hieroglyphic* : see note to P. 20, l. 19.

*To the Survivors.*

P. 102, ll. 1-2. Compare Gordon Bottomley's "To Iron-founders and others," especially lines 21-24 :—

"The grass, forerunner of life, has gone ;  
But plants that spring in ruins and shards  
Attend until your dream is done :  
I have seen hemlocks in your yards."

And compare note to P. 223, ll. 30-31.

l. 3. *Locust-swarm* : the locust, a migratory winged insect, in shape like the grasshopper, well-known for its ravages in Asia and Africa, where, migrating in myriads, it often eats up every green thing.

l. 6. *Solar* : representing or symbolising the sun.

l. 7. *Promethean fire* : Prometheus was a demi-god, who made men out of clay, stole fire from Olympus, and taught men the use of it and various arts, for which he was chained by Zeus to a rock in the Caucasus, where his liver was preyed upon every day by a vulture. See "Prometheus, the Firegiver," by Robert Bridges, "Prometheus Bound," by Aeschylus, and "Prometheus Unbound," by Shelley.

l. 8. *Scatheless* : unharmed.

l. 9. *Relumed* : rekindled, lit anew.

l. 16. *Excalibur* : the name of King Arthur's sword, which he drew out of a stone when no one else could draw it, or which was given him by the Lady of the Lake. When Arthur was mortally wounded, he ordered Sir Bedivere to throw Excalibur into the water. A hand rose from the water, caught the sword, and vanished.

l. 20. *Trident of Cailar* : the trident of the Camargue cowboys. The Camargue is a pampa at the mouth of the Rhône, which forms a vast grazing ground for thousands of wild cattle and horses. In order to watch them the better, the men who look after the wild bulls ride very swift and nimble small white horses. See Roy Campbell's "Horses on the Camargue."

l. 25. *Niagara* : Niagara Falls, on the river between Canada and the United States.

*Set free* : from ice.

l. 26. *Commando* : the Marquis of Baroncelli-Javon, to whom the poem is dedicated.

l. 28. "*Charlies*" : city workers and suburban dwellers.

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*Who Stands Erect upon the Edge.*

P. 103, l. 24. *Facebothways* : compare Mr. Facing-Both-Ways in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress."

*The Prisoner.*

P. 106, l. 18. *Ilex* : the holm oak or evergreen oak.

*Midnight.*

P. 107, l. 3 *Arcturus* : see note to P. 66, l. 3.

*The Chestnut Casts his Flambeaux.*

P. 109. "Housman's is not a doctrine that serves men in righting intolerable wrongs, but one that helps them to bear inevitable griefs. He repeats that life is short and cruel, lovers are fickle, and brief recompense for the harshness of man's lot comes with a glimpse of natural beauty or the solace of song or friendship."—Babette Deutsch. (From "This Modern Poetry," by kind permission of the author and Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd.)

l. 1. *Flambeaux* : flaming torches.

l. 5. *Scant* : cut down.

*We are the Sailors of a Stranger Sea.*

P. 110, l. 16. *Close-hauled* : with the sail-tacks hauled close, for sailing as near the wind as possible.

l. 18. *Halliard-taut* : a halyard is a rope or tackle used for raising or lowering a sail, yard, or spar.

l. 24. *Caulked* : see note to P. 90, l. 19.

*Rock Pilgrim.*

P. 112. See note to P. 28.

l. 6. *Why should I covet the tide* : "Why should I covet what is easy to do? Why should I want to go with the easy-going, pleasure-loving, selfish, conventional, opportunist crowd?"—Herbert Palmer.

l. 9. *Lagland* : "The slow, backward, slothful land where nothing aspires, or moves upwards or onwards."—Herbert Palmer.

l. 10. *Tormentil* : a long-growing rosaceous herb, with four-petalled yellow flowers, of trailing habit, common on heaths and dry pastures, and having strongly astringent roots.

*Heath-hill* : open uncultivated ground ; a bare tract



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of land, naturally covered with low herbage and dwarf shrubs, especially with heath, heather, or ling.

l. 11. *Man's days are as grass* : Psalm ciii. 15 : "As for man, his days are as grass."

l. 16. *Moloch* : the name of a Canaanite idol, to whom children were sacrificed as burnt offerings. Hence, an object to which horrible sacrifices are made. Compare Milton's "Paradise Lost," I. 392-393 :—

"Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood,  
Of human sacrifice."

P. 113, l. 2. *Robin Death* : "The Robin is the friendliest of all birds to human beings. To other birds he is cocky and quarrelsome, aloof and independent. Robin Hood is the symbol of genial outlawry—at any rate, of strong, gallant, and rather pugnacious outlawry. The symbol of the claw is double—the claw of the bird, the claw of the skeleton Death."—Herbert Palmer.

l. 4. *Scree*s : precipitous, stony slopes upon a mountain-side.

### *The West.*

P. 113, l. 10. *The west* : symbol of adventure.

l. 18. *Forty counties* : of England.

P. 114, l. 1. *Furloughs* : leave of absence, especially a permit given to a soldier to be absent from duty for a stated time.

l. 20. *Bourn* : destination, goal.

### *Creed.*

P. 115. A creed is a confession of faith.

l. 4. *Burnet moth* : a greenish-black moth with crimson spots on its wings, found on the plant burnet—the Great Burnet common in meadows all over Europe, and the Common Burnet growing on chalky soils, its slightly astringent leaves used in salads or soups.

l. 5. *Bach* : Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), one of the greatest composers of all times. He was for many years musical director at two churches at Leipzig, where he composed most of his music. Much of this is of a sacred character, highly intellectual, and showing a supreme command of counterpoint and fugue.

*Landor's prose* : Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) ; he lived in Italy, at Bath, and the last part of his life in Florence. His principal prose work took the

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form of "Imaginary Conversations." These show an elaborate and finished style of great charm.

*I Spend My Days Vainly.*

P. 116. This poem is one of several experimentally written in what the author calls Analysed Rhyme, which "takes notice of both vowel and consonant, as true rhyme does, but splits the endings up and interchanges the vowels. Thus *vainly* and *elate* have rhyming vowels and different consonants, so have *delight* and *finely*, while *vainly* and *finely* have rhyming consonantal endings and different vowels, and so have *delight* and *elate*. This provides an entirely new set of pairs."—Frank Kendon.

*Men Improve with the Years.*

P. 118, l. 6. *Triton* : a sea-deity, of semi-human form ; in sculpture, represented as a bearded man with the hind-quarters of a fish and usually holding a trident and a shell-trumpet.

*To Grow Older.*

P. 119, l. 20. *A-widdershin* : in a direction opposite to the usual ; in a direction contrary to the apparent course of the sun, considered unlucky or causing disaster.

*Buch der Lieder.*

P. 121. The "Buch der Lieder" (Book of Songs) is a book of lyrics, pre-eminent for wit and raillery, by the German poet Heinrich Heine (1797–1856). He was born of Jewish parents in Dusseldorf. He migrated to Paris in 1830 and there spent his remaining days.

*The Fiddler and the Girl.*

P. 122, l. 16. *Marlowe* : see note to P. 3, l. 9.

P. 123, l. 26. *Eglantine* : the sweet-briar.

*Cupula* : a cup-shaped case, as in the fruit of oak, beech, and hazel.

l. 27. *Juniper* : a genus of coniferous evergreen shrubs and trees, especially the common European species, a hardy spreading shrub or low tree, having awl-shaped prickly leaves and bluish-black or purple berries, with a pungent taste, yielding a volatile oil used in medicine as a stimulant, also in the manufacture of gin.

*Elijah's cloaking tower* : Elijah was a Hebrew prophet in the reign of Ahab. He was miraculously fed by ravens at the brook Cherith ; raised the dead son of the

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widow of Zarephath ; confuted the prophets of Baal ; and was carried to Heaven in a chariot of fire. See 1 Kings xvii. *et seq.* When he was fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, he "went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree : and he requested for himself that he might die. . . . And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. . . . And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God " (1 Kings xix. 4-8).

- P. 124, l. 7. *Acolyte* : an attendant, a devoted follower ; ecclesiastically, one belonging to the highest of minor orders, whose duties are concerned with attendance at the altar and carrying candles.

*Coole and Ballylee, 1931.*

- P. 125. "At Coole, a country-house in Galway, lived Lady Gregory, a woman of genius. All men of talent, all profound men, gathered there. This poem was written shortly before her death."—W. B. Yeats.

- P. 125, l. 22. "*Dark*" *Rastry's "cellar"* : "The blind poet Rastry called the water 'The Cellar.'"—W. B. Yeats.

- l. 26. *Water* : "The poem is intricate with metaphor. The swan and water are emblems of the soul."—W. B. Yeats.

- l. 30. *Tragic buskin* : the high thick-soled boot (*cothurnus*) worn in Athenian tragedy.

- P. 126, l. 2. *Swan* : see note to P. 125, l. 26.

- P. 127, l. 2. *Homer* : see note to P. 3, l. 7.

*An Ancient to Ancients.*

- P. 127. "With its recurrent formal word of address, 'Gentlemen,' coming in the same place in each stanza but spoken in varying tones, the poem has a singing quality that does not impugn the thought."—Babette Deutsch. (From "This Modern Poetry," by kind permission of the author and Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd.)

- l. 9. *Tabrets* : small drums used chiefly as an accompaniment to the pipe or trumpet.

- l. 25. *Polka* : a lively dance of Bohemian origin, the

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music for which is in duple time. It was introduced into England in 1843.

1. 27. *Quadrille* : a square dance, of French origin, usually performed by four couples, and containing five sections or figures, each of which is a complete dance in itself.

*Schottische* : a dance of foreign origin resembling the polka, first introduced into England in 1848.

- P. 128, l. 1. "*Sir Roger*" : Sir Roger de Coverley, an English country-dance.

1. 2. *The "Girl" (the famed "Bohemian")* : "*The Bohemian Girl*" (1843), a light opera, by Michael William Balfe (1808-1870), an Irish musical composer. It is the most famous and successful of his operas, was given all over Europe, and even to-day keeps its place in the active repertory.

1. 3. "*Trovatore*" : "*Il Trovatore*" (1853), an opera, by the Italian composer, Verdi (1813-1901).

1. 7. *Etty* : William Etty (1787-1849), English painter of historical subjects. A great colourist. Buried St. Mary's Abbey, York. Compare note to P. 18, l. 7.

*Mulready* : William Mulready (1786-1863), a genre painter, remembered as the designer of the Mulready envelope, the penny postage envelope issued by Rowland Hill in 1840.

*Maclise* : Daniel Maclise (1806-1870), born in Cork, Irish historical and genre painter. He painted a series of cartoons in fresco for the House of Lords, illustrating the glories of England.

1. 10. *Bulwer* : Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer, First Baron Lytton (1803-1873), a versatile writer. His principal novels are "*Eugene Aram*" (1832), "*The Last Days of Pompeii*" (1834), "*The Last of the Barons*" (1843), "*The Caxtons*" (1849); his best-known play is "*The Lady of Lyons*."

*Scott* : Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), the famous poet and novelist.

*Dumas* : Alexandre Dumas (1803-1870), French dramatist and novelist. His fame rests mainly on the long series of romantic novels in which he dealt with many periods of European history. Vigour and vitality characterise the novels; the most famous are the D'Artagnan group, the Chicot group, the Revolution group, and "*The Count of Monte-Cristo*."

*Sand* : George Sand (1804-1876), French novelist,



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pseudonym of Armandine Lucile Aurore Dupin. Her novels divide themselves into three periods—the first (1831–1834) includes “*Lélia*” and is marked by freshness and a spirit of revolt against the institution of marriage; the second (1834–1844) includes “*Consuelo*,” the product of her study of philosophy and politics and intercourse with great minds (the poet and dramatist, Alfred de Musset, and the composer, Chopin); the third, the period of her retirement in the country, includes the charming rustic idyll of “*La Petite Fadette*.”

l. 12. *Tennyson*: Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), the poet.

l. 22. *Rout*: party, assembly.

l. 23. *Aïdes' den*: the realm of Hades, or Pluto, the Greek god of the nether world. Hades ruled over the ghosts of the dead. The name Hades is also applied to his realm.

P. 129, l. 1. *Sophocles*: (496–406 B.C.) one of the three great Attic tragedians. Born at Colonus. He first appeared as a tragic poet in 468 when he won the prize against Aeschylus. After this he was regarded as the favourite poet of Athens. He was the first to increase the number of actors from two to three. His tragedies are more human, less heroic, than those of Aeschylus. He is pre-eminently the dramatist of human character; but he differed from Euripides in representing men as they ought to be, while Euripides exhibited men as they are. He is the most effective of the three poets as a dramatist, both by the use of tragic contrast in his situations and by his gift of depicting character. His plays include “*Oedipus Tyrannus*,” “*Oedipus at Colonus*,” “*Antigone*,” and “*Electra*.” See Matthew Arnold's lines:—

“He saw life steadily and saw it whole,  
The mellow glory of the Attic stage,  
Singer of sweet Colonus and her child.”

*Plato*: (428–348 B.C.) great Greek philosopher, the founder of idealism in philosophy. Born at Athens. He became a pupil and devoted admirer of Socrates. He began to teach in the Academy at Athens and in his garden at Colonus. The remainder of his life was mainly occupied with instruction and the composition of “*Dialogues*” in which he embodied his views and in which Socrates figures as conducting the discussions.

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*Socrates* : (469–399 B.C.) great Greek philosopher. Born near Athens. He conceived himself as having a religious mission, receiving guidance from a supernatural voice (his “daemon.”) He occupied his life with oral instruction, frequenting public places and conversing with all and sundry, seeking the truth and the exposure of pride and error. In consequence he incurred the malevolence of those who pretended to wisdom, and was finally accused of impiety, condemned by a narrow majority of his judges, and sentenced to death (by drinking hemlock). Socrates wrote nothing, but the general method and tendency of his teaching are preserved in Plato’s “Dialogues.” His chief importance may perhaps be said to consist in the fact that he was the first philosopher to connect the notions of virtue and knowledge.

- l. 3. *Pythagoras* : (c. 580–c. 500 B.C.) Greek philosopher. Born at Samos. He assigned a mathematical basis to the universe. He discovered the rotation of the earth on its own axis. He greatly advanced mathematical, geometrical, and astronomical science. He is credited with the discovery of the proof that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides.

*Thucydides* : (c. 460–c. 400 B.C.) great Athenian historian. His history, which deals with the Peloponnesian War, the great war between Athens and Sparta, down to the year 411, is concise and is marked by scrupulous accuracy. It is the first work of the kind in which events are traced to their cause and their political lessons brought out.

- l. 4. *Herodotus* : (c. 480–c. 425 B.C.) Greek historian. He is known as “the father of history,” for he was the first to collect his materials systematically, test their accuracy as far as he was able, and arrange them agreeably. The main theme of his work is the struggle between Asia and Greece.

*Homer* : see note to P. 3, l. 7.

- l. 5. *Clement* : (A.D. c. 150–c. 215) Clement of Alexandria, one of the early Greek Fathers of the Church. He was probably born at Athens. Four of his works have come down to us. He was the first to apply Greek culture and philosophy to the exposition of Christian faith.

*Augustin* : (A.D. 354–430) St. Augustine of Hippo.

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Born in Numidia. He became Bishop of Hippo in 395. The most famous of his numerous works is "The City of God," a treatise in vindication of the Christian Church. His sermons were used throughout the Middle Ages.

*Origen* : (A.D. 185–254) the successor of Clement as head of the Christian School of Alexandria, and the first great scholar among the Greek Fathers. Apart from many theological works he is chiefly famous for his "Hexapla," or edition of the Greek versions of the Old Testament. We have only fragments of the work.

1. 6. *Burnt brighter towards their setting-day* : Compare Thomas Hardy himself, who published "The Dynasts" in 1910 at the age of seventy, "Late Lyrics and Earlier" in 1922, and "Winter Words" in 1928 ; and Robert Bridges, whose masterpiece, "The Testament of Beauty," appeared in 1929 in the poet's eighty-sixth year.

*Gerontion*.

- P. 132. The motto is from Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure." For a full analysis of this poem see "A Dialogue on Modern Poetry" by Ruth Bailey (Oxford Univ. Press). The poem is "a picture of desiccation, an epitome of decline, the precursor of 'The Waste Land.'"—Babette Deutsch. (From "This Modern Poetry," by kind permission of the author and Messrs. Faber & Faber, Ltd.)

"The poem shows consciousness of the nature of evil . . . and of the emptiness of life without belief. . . . In the reflections of the old man here is a full acceptance of suffering, but not the realisation embodied in T. S. Eliot's later poems that 'the souls in purgatory suffer because they *wish to suffer*, for purgation.'"—F. O. Matthiessen.

- P. 133, l. 6. *Estaminet* : a French café, in which smoking is allowed.

- l. 9. *Merds* : dung, excrement.

- ll. 12–30. "This is an example of the kind of hard precision with which T. S. Eliot's reliance upon a 'set of objects' enables him to thread together the range of his associations. The transitions are sudden, but, in terms of the context, unmistakeable. There could hardly be a more effective way of stressing the intimate connection between the mysteries of religion and sex than by linking together the Christian story with the upsinging



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energies of spring. Yet it is also 'depraved' May, and suddenly we are aware that it is not simply the Holy Communion that is being eaten and drunk 'among whispers': that last phrase also relates to the empty, slightly sinister cosmopolitan world in which Gerontion's life has been betrayed, his passion and ardour have been divided and lost. The series of glimpses of various figures in this world serves as an illustration of what T. S. Eliot tries to convey by his use of images. His design is to give the *exact* perceived detail, without comment, and let that picture carry its own connotations. The images here are 'consciously concrete'; they correspond as closely as possible to something he has actually seen and remembered. But he also believes that if they are clearly rendered, they will stand for something larger than themselves; they will not depend for their apprehension upon any private reference, but will become 'unconsciously general.'"—F. O. Matthiessen.

- l. 16. *Swaddled with darkness*: "A word can carry different shades of meaning at once, its connotations are extended or shifted according to its relation to the moving procession of other words that precede and come after. Note the utter shift in the implication of the phrase 'among whispers,' when it is seen in the light, not only of what went before, but of the lines that follow. With the figurative expression 'swaddled with darkness,' the picture of the Christ child is also present to the imagination; and so with 'judas'—in this context it cannot stand simply as the name of a flowering tree—it too is caught up in the whole tone of betrayal and in turn reinforces it."—F. O. Matthiessen.

*Juvescence*: youth.

- ll. 17–18. "Brilliant onomatopoeic use of the long languorous 'a,' contrasted with the short active 'i.'"—Hugh Ross Williamson.
- l. 18. *Flowering judas*: a tree of Southern Europe and parts of Asia, with abundant purple flowers, which appear in spring before the leaves. So called from a popular belief that Judas hanged himself on a tree of this kind.
- l. 20. *Mr. Silvero*: the name of an imaginary person, a member of decayed society. Compare the others below.
- l. 21. *Limoges*: a town in Haute-Vienne, France, the principal seat of porcelain manufacture.

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- l. 23. *Titians* : paintings by Tiziano Vccellio (1482 (?)-1576), the great Italian painter. He was a pupil of Giorgione, the Venetian master. He excelled as a painter of portraits, and of sacred and mythological subjects.
- P. 134, ll. 1-18. "Bare sustained dramatic verse of the first order—after Tourneur (1575 ?-1626) and Middleton (1570 ?-1627)."—F. O. Matthiessen.
- l. 20. *Concitation* : stirring up, excitement.
- ll. 23-26. "Compare Middleton's 'The Changeling':—  
 'O come not near me, sir, I shall defile you !  
 I that am of your blood was taken from you  
 For your better health ; look no more upon't,  
 But cast it to the ground, regardlessly,  
 Let the common sewer take it from distinction.'  
 The content of the two passages is not at all the same ; but the contexts they rise from both express a horror of lust, and thus adumbrate the possible reason why Middleton's cadences stirred in T. S. Eliot's memory at the moment that he was shaping his lines."—F. O. Matthiessen.
- l. 27. *I have lost my sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch.*  
 Compare "As You Like It," II. vii. 165-166 :—  
 "Second childishness and mere oblivion,  
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything."
- P. 135, l. 3. *Weevil* : a beetle, the larvae of which, and sometimes the beetles themselves, are destructive by boring into grain, nuts, the bark of trees, etc.
- ll. 4-6. "Compare Chapman's (1559 ?-1634) 'Bussy D'Ambois' (1607) :—  
 'Fly where men feel  
 The burning axletree, and those that suffer  
 Beneath the chariot of the snowy Bear.'  
 C. L. Barber has suggested this possible connection : 'chariot' has been transformed into 'circuit' quite naturally in the modern poet's more scientific, less mythological image, while 'the sense of suffering' turns 'snowy' into 'shuddering' ; and T. S. Eliot's whole conception of a catastrophe comes out in the description of the breaking apart of Chapman's concentrated suffering 'beneath the chariot'—maybe."—F. O. Matthiessen.
- (The passages by F. O. Matthiessen are from his "The Achievement of T. S. Eliot," by kind permission of the author and the Oxford University Press.)

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- l. 5. *Bear* : see note to P. 68, l. 14.  
 l. 7. *Belle Isle* : a strait between Labrador and Newfoundland, dangerous to navigation because of fog and floating ice.

*The Horn* : Cape Horn, the southernmost point of America, on the last island of the Fuegian Archipelago. Discovered by the Dutch navigator Schouten in 1616 and named after Hoorn, his birthplace in North Holland.

- l. 8. *The Gulf* : the Gulf Stream, a great oceanic current of warm water which issues from the Gulf of Mexico and runs parallel to the American coast as far as Newfoundland, and thence in the direction of Europe.  
 l. 9. *The Trades* : the Trade Winds, which blow constantly towards the Equator from about the thirtieth parallels, North and South, their main direction in the northern hemisphere being from the North-East, and in the southern from the South-East.

*The Cul-de-Sac.*

P. 142, l. 3. *Cul-de-sac* : a blind alley, a passage closed at one end, a place having no outlet except by the entrance.

- l. 24. *Stonecrops* : the common name of wall-pepper, a herb with bright yellow flowers and small cylindrical fleshy leaves, growing in masses on rocks, old walls, etc.

P. 143, l. 8. *Alchemy* : the chemistry of the Middle Ages and the sixteenth century—limited to the pursuit of the transmutation of baser metals into gold, and the search for the alkahest (the universal solvent), and the panacea.

*Song of Ophelia the Survivor.*

P. 145. If Ophelia had survived Hamlet. See Shakespeare's "Hamlet."

*Omnipresence.*

P. 150, l. 4. *Nenuphars* : water-lilies, especially the common white or yellow species.

- l. 13. *Descant* : play or sing an air in harmony with a fixed theme.

*On Harting Down.*

P. 152. Harting Down is in South Sussex.

- l. 24. *Polls* : heads.

P. 153, l. 5. *A dun buck* : a deer, especially a fallow-deer, of a dull greyish-brown.

- l. 15. *Sublimed* : transmuted.

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### *The Bad Girl.*

- P. 155, l. 17. *Covert* : undergrowth and bushes.
- ll. 23-24. *I cast away things childish.* See 1 Corinthians xiii. 11 : "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child : but when I became a man, I put away childish things."
- P. 156, l. 4. *Cozen* : defraud by deceit, dupe, impose upon.
- l. 5. *Medlar* : a fruit that is eaten only when decayed. Compare "As You Like It," III. ii. 127-129, "You'll be rotten ere you be half ripe, and that's the right virtue of the medlar."
- l. 9. *Ben Jonson's lily.* See the extract called "The Noble Nature" from "A Pindaric Ode" by Ben Jonson (1573?-1637) :—
- "It is not growing like a tree  
In bulk, doth make man better be ;  
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere :  
A lily of a day  
Is fairer far in May,  
Although it fall and die that night—  
It was the plant and flower of light.  
In small proportions we just beauties see ;  
And in short measures life may perfect be."
- l. 13. *Saturn* : an Italian god of agriculture, later identified with the Greek Cronos, the father of Zeus. He civilized the people and taught them agriculture. His reign was so mild and beneficent that it has been called the "Golden Age."
- Venus* : the ancient goddess of beauty and love.
- l. 15. *The festering lily.* See Shakespeare's Sonnet xciv, 14 :  
"Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds."

### *Mary's Song.*

- P. 158, l. 3. *Breid* : bread, loaf.
- l. 6. *Lochan* : small lake.
- Burnie* : stream, small brook.

### *Wheesht, Wheesht.*

- P. 158, l. 21. *Wheesht* : be quiet.
- l. 24. *Ploys* : games.
- P. 159, l. 2. *Snod* : neat.

### *The Players.*

- P. 162, l. 16. *Lazarus* : raised from the dead by Christ.

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See St. John xi. and compare Robert Browning's "An Epistle containing the Strange Medical Experience of Karshish, the Arab Physician."

### *Skald's Death.*

P. 168. A skald is an ancient Scandinavian poet—hence, any poet.

### *He Will Watch the Hawk.*

P. 172, l. 25. *Strong-thewed* : with strong muscles, powerful.

P. 173, l. 5. *Icarus* : son of Dædalus. He flew with his father from Crete ; but the sun melted the wax with which his wings were fastened on and he fell into the sea, hence called the Icarian Sea. Compare "3 Henry VI," V. vi. 18–25 :—

"GLOUCESTER : Why, what a peevish fool was that  
of Crete,  
That taught his son the office of a fowl !  
And yet, for all his wings, the fool was drown'd.

KING HENRY : I, Dædalus ; my poor boy, Icarus ;  
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course ;  
The sun, that sear'd the wings of my sweet boy,  
Thy brother Edward, and thyself the sea,  
Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life."

### *The Dead Poet.*

P. 173. This is a reminiscence of Edward Thomas, as recorded by the novelist, M. P. Shiel, and versified by his collaborator, John Gawsworth.

### *Padraic O'Conaire—Gaelic Story-Teller.*

P. 173, l. 22. *Wakehouse* : the house where the wake was held—the watching of a dead body before the funeral by the friends and neighbours of the deceased in which the lamentations were often followed by an orgy.

P. 174, l. 13. *Wicklow* : the capital and seaport of the maritime county of Wicklow, a province of Leinster, Eire.

l. 17. *Galway* : a maritime county in Connaught, Eire. The seaport and capital was formerly noted for its extensive trade, particularly with Spain. At least one ship of the Spanish Armada (1588) was wrecked there.

### *As Though with the Eyes of a Poet Dead and Gone.*

P. 176, l. 4. *John Clare* : (1793–1864) a rural poet, the son of a Northampton labourer. He himself was at various



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times a herd-boy, militiaman, vagrant, and unsuccessful farmer, who became insane in 1837. He published in 1820 "Poems Descriptive of Rural Life." A definitive edition of his poems appeared in 1920, edited by Edmund Blunden and Alan Porter.

*At the Grave of Henry Vaughan.*

P. 176. Henry Vaughan (1622-1695), religious poet. He was educated at Jesus College, Oxford. He is noteworthy for his "Silex Scintillans," a collection of religious poems. He wrote four volumes of poems in the vein of George Herbert.

l. 5. *A river* : the Usk.

l. 8. *Here* : in the churchyard at Llansaintfraed, Scethiog-on-Usk, Brecknockshire.

l. 11. *The Silurist* : a native of a district formerly inhabited by the Silures, an ancient British tribe which inhabited the south-east part of Wales. Vaughan is known as the Silurist because of his love for the county of Brecknockshire, the county of his birth and his life-long residence (at Newton St. Bridget).

*Physician* : he left Oxford for London with the idea of studying for the law, but at some time unknown abandoned it for medicine. For forty years he was a doctor among the Welsh peasants.

l. 12. No portrait of Vaughan is extant.

*Ishmael.*

P. 177. For the story of Ishmael see Genesis xvi. *et seq.*, especially xvi. 12, "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him."

l. 15. *Crepitant* : making a crackling noise.

*Wandering Men.*

P. 178, l. 6. *Canticles* : hymns, especially one of the hymns (mostly from the Scriptures) used in the public services of the Church.

l. 8. *Bell-house* : belfry, bell-tower.

*Kildare* : a county in Leinster, Eire, famous for its antiquities, and a decayed town, of ancient political and ecclesiastical importance.

l. 10. *Great Brigid* : St. Bridget or Brigit or Bride (452-523), a patron saint of Ireland. She received the veil from St. Patrick at the age of fourteen and was probably



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invested with rank corresponding to that of a bishop. She was the founder of the Church of Kildare in 484, and is commemorated on February 1st. She constructed her cell under an old oak. The flame of St. Brigid was tended at Kildare for many centuries, but the practice was ultimately condemned as superstitious by a Norman archbishop of Dublin. "Many of the miracles attributed to St. Brigid are of a curious visional quality and deal with mental phenomena. This is interesting in view of the fact that there has been some confusion in legend between the first and the early Brigid, the goddess of Fire and Poetic Inspiration."—Austin Clarke.

- ll. 23–24. See I Samuel xvi. especially 23 : "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand : so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." Compare Robert Browning's "Saul."

- l. 27. *Centaur* : Homer and the older mythology represent the centaurs as a rude, wild race, dwelling in the mountains of Thessaly. It was not until the fifth century B.C. that they were represented in the double shape of a man's body standing on a horse's legs.

- l. 28. *The sceptred strangers from the East* : the three Magi, who followed the Star of Bethlehem from the East to lay gifts before the infant Jesus. See St. Matthew ii. It is claimed that the bones of the Magi are deposited in Cologne Cathedral.

P. 179, l. 4. *Sightly* : handsome, beautiful.

*Colonel Fantock*.

P. 181, l. 13. *Falconry* : the art of breeding and training hawks.

- l. 18. *The castle* : Renishaw Hall, Derbyshire.

*Arabesque* : a mural or surface decoration in colour or low relief, composed in flowing lines of branches, leaves, and scroll-work fancifully intertwined.

- l. 20. *Lotus* : the plant in North Africa whose fruit produced a state of dreamy forgetfulness. See the "Odyssey" (Book IX) and Tennyson's "The Lotus-Eaters."

- l. 25. *Dagobert* : Osbert Sitwell. See Biographical Notes.

*Peregrine* : Sacheverell Sitwell (1897). Poet, and

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music and art critic. Works include : " Southern Baroque Art " (1924) ; " All Summer in a Day " (1926)—autobiography ; " Dr. Donne and Gargantua " (1930) ; " Canons of Giant Art " (1933) ; " Dance of the Quick and the Dead " (1936) ; " Collected Poems " (1936).

P. 182, l. 8. *Paladins* : renowned heroes.

l. 16. *Music-box* : a mechanical musical instrument, consisting of a revolving toothed cylinder working upon a resonant comb-like metal plate.

l. 17. *Circean enchantments* : Circe, in the " Odyssey," was celebrated for her knowledge of magic and venomous herbs. She inhabited an island called Aeaea. Odysseus, returning from the Trojan War, visited this island. His companions were changed by Circe's potions into swine. Odysseus, fortified against her enchantment by the herb called moly, demanded from Circe the restoration of his companions, and Circe complied.

l. 34. *Pantaloons* : a character in Italian comedy, represented as a lean and foolish old man, wearing slippers, pantaloons and spectacles. Compare " As You Like It," II. vii. 157-163.

P. 183, l. 3. *Apocryphal* : of doubtful authenticity—spurious, mythical. From the Apocrypha—those books of the Bible that were not originally written in Hebrew and not accounted genuine by the Jews and at the Reformation were excluded from the Sacred Canon by the Protestant party.

l. 15. *Angevin dead kings* : the early Plantagenet kings (of Anjou) from Henry II to John.

l. 27. *Troy Park* : Renishaw Hall, Derbyshire. Compare the book of poems, " Troy Park " (1925).

l. 29. *Ophelia drowned* : " Hamlet," IV. vii. 167-185.

P. 184, l. 6. *Hercules* : the hero of ancient Greek myth, who was possessed of superhuman physical strength and vigour. He undertook twelve labours of great difficulty and danger. After his death he obtained divine honours, having devoted the labours of his life to the benefit of mankind.

l. 7. *Troy* : the kernel of the story of the Trojan War is contained in the two epic poems by Homer, the " Iliad " and the " Odyssey."

l. 11. *Mozartian tune* : Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), Austrian composer. He showed a precocious knowledge of music when only three years old.

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He composed over forty symphonies ; his operas include "The Magic Flute," "Don Giovanni," and "Figaro." He was gifted with an inexhaustible vein of the richest, purest melody.

### *The Sprig of Lime.*

- P. 184. Robert Nichols considers that "music is the foundation of poetry, which is not intellectual, not shrewd or observant, but primarily rhythmical."
- P. 185, l. 14. *Vitreous* : glass-like.  
 l. 30. *Gouged* : lined, wrinkled.
- P. 186, l. 2. *Vesperal* : evening.  
 l. 11. *Metheglin* : a spiced or medicated form of mead.  
 l. 22. *Hispid* : shaggy, bristling.

### *Forefathers.*

- P. 187. Compare Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard."
- l. 19. *Smock* : a smock-frock—a loose-fitting garment of coarse linen or the like, worn by farm-labourers and usually reaching to mid-leg or lower.  
*Crook* : a shepherd's staff, having one end hooked, for catching the hinder leg of a sheep.
- l. 23. *Harvest-supper* : the supper celebrating the successful bringing home of the last of harvest.
- l. 24. *Huntsman's moon* : the month or full moon following the harvest moon. Hunting does not begin until after harvest.
- P. 188, l. 5. *Quill* : a pen ; the feather of a goose, etc., formed into a pen by pointing and slitting the lower end of the barrel.
- l. 21. *Tansy* : an erect herbaceous plant, growing about two feet high, with yellow, rayless, button-like flowers ; all parts of the plant have a strong, aromatic, and bitter taste.

### *Mr. Nutch.*

- P. 190, l. 3. *Swags* : wreaths or festoons of fruit.
- l. 4. *Crabs* : crab-apples, wild apples, especially connoting their sour, harsh quality.
- P. 191, l. 2. *Prometheus* : see note to P. 102, l. 7.

### *The Honey-Seeker.*

- P. 191. Gilbert White (1720-1793) was born at Selborne, Hants. He spent most of his life as curate of Selborne.

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He began in 1751 to keep a "Garden Kalendar" and later a "Naturalist's Journal." He made the acquaintance of two distinguished naturalists, with whom from 1767 he carried on a correspondence, which formed the basis of his "Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne" (published in 1789). The Selborne Society for the preservation of birds was founded in 1885 in memory of Gilbert White.

Letter XXVII runs as follows: "We had in this village more than twenty years ago an idiot boy, whom I well remember, who, from a child, showed a strong propensity to bees; they were his food, his amusement, his sole object. And as people of this cast have seldom more than one point in view, so this lad exerted all his few faculties on this one pursuit. In the winter he dozed away his time, within his father's house, by the fireside, in a kind of torpid state, seldom departing from the chimney-corner; but in the summer he was all alert, and in quest of his game in the fields, and on sunny banks. Honey-bees, humble-bees, and wasps, were his prey wherever he found them; he had no apprehensions from their stings, but would seize them *nudis manibus* (with bare hands), and at once disarm them of their weapons, and suck their bodies for the sake of their honey-bags. Sometimes he would fill his bosom between his shirt and his skin with a number of these captives, and sometimes would confine them in bottles. He was a very *Merops apiaster*, or bee-bird, and very injurious to men that kept bees; for he would slide into their bee-gardens, and sitting down before the stools, would rap with his finger on the hives, and so take the bees as they came out. He has been known to overturn hives for the sake of honey, of which he was passionately fond. Where metheglin was making he would linger round the tubs and vessels, begging a draught of what he called bee-wine. As he ran about he used to make a humming noise with his lips, resembling the buzzing of bees. This lad was lean and sallow, and of a cadaverous complexion; and, except in his favourite pursuit, in which he was wonderfully adroit, discovered no manner of understanding. When a tall youth he was removed from hence to a distant village, where he died, as I understand, before he arrived at manhood."

P. 191, l. 14. *Old Nick*: Satan, the devil.



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P. 192, l. 3. *Yarely* : promptly, briskly.

l. 4. *Jessamin* : jasmine, a climbing shrub with fragrant white or yellow salver-shaped flowers, grown in England since the sixteenth century.

l. 6. *Nightjars* : common nocturnal birds, so called from the peculiar whirring noise, something like that of a large spinning-wheel, that the male makes at certain periods of the year. Sometimes called the goatsucker.

l. 17. *Girded* : scoffed, sneered.

### *April Fool.*

P. 193, l. 24. *Coney* : rabbit.

l. 25. *Ruth* : sorrow, grief.

### *Three Old Brothers.*

P. 195, l. 1. *Gammy crone* : lame, crooked, feeble, old woman.

l. 16. *Compline* : the last of the seven canonical hours in the Roman Catholic Church, said about 8 or 9 P.M., and so called because it completes the series of daily prayers.

*Matins* : properly a midnight office, but occasionally recited at daybreak. Hence, from dark to dawn.

l. 31. *Paris* : a son of Priam, King of Troy. He carried off Helen, the wife of Menelaus, thus bringing about the Trojan War. In the course of this he was killed by a poisoned arrow.

*The Grecian chiefs* : who fought against Troy ; prominent among them were Odysseus, Agamemnon, and Achilles.

l. 32. *The Three Ulster brothers* : Naoise, Ainnle, and Ardan, who, with their father Uisneach, were killed by King Conchobhar as a revenge for Naoise's elopement with Deirdre. This ancient story of Deirdre is a favourite with Irish writers and has been retold by, among others, W. B. Yeats, James Stephens, and Austin Clarke.

### *Fancy's Knell.*

P. 196, l. 2. *Abdon under Clee* : a parish on the west of Brown Clee Hill, overlooking the valley of the Corve, South Salop.

l. 11. *To wind the measures* : to move in a curve in the rhythmical motion of the dance.

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- l. 25. *Wenlock Edge* : a limestone ridge in South Salop. The hills command very fine views.

*Umbered* : coloured dark brown.

- l. 26. *Abdon Burf* : Brown Clee Hill has two summits, each marked by a camp. Clee Burf is the more southerly. Abdon Burf (? Buarth, enclosure) is encircled by a vallum of dewstone. In the enclosure are remains of circles, and a large unhewn stone called the Giant's Shaft.

- l. 30. *Upshot beam* : the last beam of the setting sun.

*To an Old Lady.*

- P. 198, l. 26. *Ripeness is all* : a quotation from "King Lear," V. ii. 9-11 :

"Men must endure

Their going hence, even as their coming hither :

Ripeness is all."

The one thing needful is that men should be prepared for death. Compare "Hamlet," V. ii. 235, "The readiness is all."

- P. 199, ll. 1-2. "Our earth without a god's name such as the other planets have is compared to some body of people (absurd to say 'the present generation') without fundamental beliefs as a basis for action."—William Empson.

- l. 4. "When a hive needs a new queen and the keeper puts one in, the bees sometimes kill her."—William Empson.

- l. 13. "Her precession is some customary movement of the planet, meant to suggest the dignity of 'procession.'"—William Empson.

- l. 15. "The unconfined surface of her sphere is like the universe in being finite but unbounded, but I failed to get that into the line."—William Empson.

*Old Soldier.*

- P. 200. "Spain is the symbol of the old world of quiet meditation and poetry being modernized and turned away from true beauty—cathedrals being replaced by cinemas and serious writing by the sensational press."—Patrick Kavanagh.

- l. 11. *Golden fleece* : sought by the Argonauts, who accompanied Jason to Colchis. With the help of Medea, the king's daughter, who fell in love with Jason and



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possessed a knowledge of enchantments, Jason obtained the Fleece.

- l. 22. *Achilles* : in Homer the chief of the Greek heroes. He is graced with all the attributes of a hero : in birth, beauty, swiftness, strength, and valour he has not his peer.

P. 201, ll. 11-12. The rebellion against the Spanish Government by the Fascists, begun in 1936.

*Girl to Soldier on Leave.*

P. 206, l. 21. *Titan* : one of the race of giants who carried on a long and fierce struggle with the Olympian gods. See Keats's "Hyperion."

- l. 23. *Zeus* : the god of the sky and the weather, the dispenser of good and evil in the destinies of men, the father and saviour of men. His sons were Apollo and Hermes.

P. 207, l. 2. *Prometheus* : see note to P. 102, l. 7.

- l. 7. *Babel-cities* : see note to P. 95, l. 28.

- l. 9. *Gyves* : shackles, fetters.

- l. 11. *Circe's swine* : see note to P. 182, l. 17.

- l. 13. *The Somme* : The Somme is a river of Northern France. A succession of limited engagements constituted the offensive campaign of the Franco-British armies in July 1916.

*The Golden Room.*

P. 207, l. 25. *Lascelles Abercrombie* : see Biographical Notes. *Rupert Brooke* : (1887-1915). He began to write poetry while at Rugby, and his first volume of verse was published in 1911. During 1913-1914 he travelled in America and the South Seas. When the War broke out, he took part in the unsuccessful defence of Antwerp, and early in 1915 was sent to the Mediterranean. He died of fever and was buried at Scyros on April 23. His "Collected Poems" (1918) show that he was a poet of exceptional promise.

- l. 26. *Robert Frost* : American poet. Born in 1875 in San Francisco. He moved at an early age to New England. From 1911 to 1915 he lived in England, where his first book was published. Returning to the States he devoted himself to poetry and teaching. His poetry deals with the rural scene in an honest, homely way. His works include "A Boy's Will" (1913), "North of Boston" (1914), "Mountain Interval"

## NOTES TO THE POEMS

(1916), "New Hampshire" (1923), and "West-running Brook" (1928).

- l. 28. *Edward Thomas*: See Biographical Notes. For the story of their courtship and marriage see Helen Thomas's "As It Was" (1926) and "World without End" (1931).

P. 208, l. 18. *An Aegean isle*: Scyros, a mountainous isle in the Northern Sporades.

- l. 19. *Dreams of England*: See his poem, "The Soldier":—

"If I should die, think only this of me:  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is for ever England. . . .  
And think, this heart . . .  
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England  
given;  
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her  
day. . . ."

- l. 20. *Vimy Ridge*: north-east of Arras. Captured from the Germans in May 1917.

- l. 24. *Black Northern town*: Leeds, where he was Professor of English Literature at the University.

### *Horses.*

P. 211, l. 11. *Seraphim*: the highest of the nine ranks of angels—celestial beings on either side of the throne of Jehovah.

- l. 15. *Bossy*: rounded.

- l. 18. *Gloam*: gloaming, twilight.

- l. 22. *Apocalyptic*: of the nature of a revelation.

### *Toril.*

P. 212, l. 4. *Asphodels*: the immortal flowers of the Elysian fields.

- l. 8. *Cirrus*: curling muscles.

- l. 18. *Toledo*: a city in Spain, long famous for its manufacture of finely tempered sword-blades.

### *Snake.*

P. 217, l. 4. *Carob-tree*: an evergreen leguminous tree, a native of the Levant. It is large, dark-leaved and wide-spread.

- l. 21. *Etna*: a volcanic mountain of Sicily. Its first recorded eruption was in 476 B.C.

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P. 219, l. 17. *The albatross* : shot by the Ancient Mariner, in Coleridge's poem.

Toarmina is on the east coast of Sicily. On the site of the Greek city of Tauromenium, founded 403 B.C. It has the ruins of a Greek theatre, rebuilt by the Romans. Timoleon landed there when he came to deliver Sicily from her tyrants.

### *The Scorpion.*

P. 220, l. 1. *Limpopo* : a river of South Africa. It rises to the west of Pretoria and flows into the Indian Ocean to the north of Delagoa Bay. Its total length is about a thousand miles. It is called the Crocodile River. It is difficult of navigation—in the dry season on account of its shallowness, in the rainy season on account of the rapidity of its current and the quantity of floating timber.

*Tugela* : a river of Natal, South Africa. It flows into the Indian Ocean.

l. 15. *Heraldic* : like the figures on armorial bearings.

### *Hardwick Arras.*

P. 220. Arras is a rich tapestry fabric, in which figures and scenes are woven in colours. Hardwick Hall, East Derbyshire, is the seat of the Duke of Devonshire. It was built in the reign of Elizabeth by the famous "Bess of Hardwick," Countess of Shrewsbury. The stately mansion, with its six towers, parapet of open stone-work, and array of broad windows, has undergone little change since its erection. Mary Queen of Scots spent some time here under the custody of the Earl of Shrewsbury. The Council or Presence Chamber is a noble apartment ; the lower part of the walls is hung with beautiful tapestry, above which is a representation of a stag-hunt in stucco relief. Several other rooms contain valuable tapestry, one depicting the adventures of Odysseus and another the story of Esther and Ahasuerus.

### *The Unicorn.*

P. 221, l. 12. *Unicorn* : a legendary animal usually regarded as having a horse's body and a single long straight horn projecting from its forehead.

### *The Wild Swans at Coole.*

P. 222. See note on P. 125.

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### *The Heron.*

P. 223, l. 12. *Academes* : academies—the garden where Plato taught, nearly a mile north of Athens—a philosophical school or association of students. Compare Milton's "Paradise Regained," IV. 244–246 :—

"See there the olive grove of Academe,  
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird  
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long."

l. 14. *Memphian* : Memphis was the capital of Egypt during the first period of its history, to which the Pyramids belong. It was on the west bank of the Nile, south of Cairo. It was captured by the Assyrians and stormed by Cambyses. It continued to exist under the Roman Empire, but was gradually abandoned and ruined after the Mohammedan Conquest.

*Pylons* : gateways, gate-towers, especially the monumental gateways of an Egyptian temple, usually formed by two truncated pyramidal towers connected by a lower architectural member containing the gate.

l. 18. *Babylonian* : huge, gigantic. See note on P. 11, l. 13.

l. 23. *Nirvana* : in Buddhist theology, the extinction of individual existence and absorption into the supreme spirit, or the extinction of all desires and passions and attainment of perfect beatitude.

l. 25. *Patrician* : noble, aristocratic.

ll. 26–29. See the escape of the Israelites from Egypt, Exodus, xii *et seq.*

ll. 30–31. Compare note on P. 102, ll. 1–2, and "Conquerors—Lines written on Winchelsea Marshes," by Barrington Gates, especially lines 1–6 :—

"The gates of Winchelsea are down.  
The rose and the wistaria break  
Long waves of blossom on her stones,  
And these, her last beleaguers, make  
Unnoticed entry in her fort,  
For fast she sleeps and will not wake."

Compare also "Fish" by Gwen Clear, and "Beleaguered Cities" by F. L. Lucas.

### *Stormcock in Elder.*

P. 224. The stormcock is the missel-thrush, which feeds on the berries of the mistletoe.

l. 20. *Minion* : dainty, elegant.

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- l. 26. *Coverts* : the feathers that cover the bases of the wing and tail feathers.  
 l. 30. *Brindled* : streaked, tabby.  
 P. 225, l. 11. *Gabriel* : one of the archangels. Milton makes him "Chief of th' angelic guards" ("Paradise Lost," IV. 550).

### *Conundrum.*

- P. 225, l. 19. *Top-sawyers* : the sawyer who works the upper handle of a pit-saw ; hence, one who holds a superior position, the best man, a distinguished person.  
 l. 23. *Augur* : a Roman religious official, who interpreted omens derived from the flight, singing, and feeding of birds, etc., and advised upon the course of public business in accordance. Hence, a soothsayer, diviner, or prophet.  
 P. 226, l. 1. *Pythagoras* : See note on P. 129, l. 3.  
*Moses* : See note on P. 56, l. 30.  
 l. 2. *Merlin* : See note on P. 78, l. 17.  
*Numa* : the legendary second king of Rome, successor to Romulus, and revered as the founder of the Roman religious system. Legend said that he was aided by the counsel of the goddess Egeria, who loved him and became his wife. Compare Byron's "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto IV, stanzas 115-119, and Tennyson's "Palace of Art" :—  
     "Or hollowing one hand against his ear,  
     To list a foot-fall, ere he saw  
     The wood-nymph, stayed the Ausonian king to  
         hear  
     Of wisdom and of law."  
 l. 10. *To square the circle* : to convert a circle into an equivalent square—a mathematical problem of long-standing.  
 l. 11. *Four-dimensional* : the fourth dimension is an imaginary idea that has been a problem to mathematicians for many centuries. One hypothesis is that it is time.

### *Moths.*

- P. 228. There is, speaking generally, no clear line of division between moths and butterflies. Like the butterflies, moths pass through the stages of egg, caterpillar, and chrysalis before they attain the perfect state (*imago*).



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The number of moths occurring in the British Isles is well over two thousand.

P. 228, l. 6. *Sphinx moths* : the *Sphingidae* or Hawk-Moths, called Sphinx Moths from the attitude frequently assumed by the caterpillar, and Hawk-Moths from their manner of flight, which resembles the hovering and darting of a hawk. About ten species of these are true natives of the British Isles.

l. 10. *The Death's Head* : the largest species found in the British Isles, with markings on the back of the thorax resembling a human skull.

*Squeaking as he comes* : by the rustic, and possibly the uninitiated generally, this moth is looked upon as something uncanny. This is probably due to the fact that it emits a peculiar sound, like a shrill squeak ; the sound is produced by air from the air-sacs being forced through the proboscis.

l. 12. *The Deadly Nightshade* : belladonna, all parts of which are narcotic and poisonous.

l. 15. *Those small moths* : the Spurge Hawk moths. The caterpillar feeds, in August and September, on spurge—a genus of plants, many of the species containing a resinous milky juice mostly very acrid. They are very rare in Britain.

l. 21. *Leopard Moths* : a blue-black spotted white species. The moth comes out in the summer. It visits light.

*Spindles* : the stalks, stems, or shoots of plants, especially of cereals. [Spindle-tree : an ornamental European shrub, furnishing a hard fine-grained yellowish wood formerly much used for spindles.]

l. 25. *The Ghost Swift moth* : the Ghost moth of the Swifts (*Hepialidae*), distinguished by their rapid flight. The male has white wings. The species is generally distributed over the British Isles. The males may be seen in the evening, sometimes in numbers in grassy places, swaying themselves to and fro without making progress, and appearing as though they dangled from the end of an invisible thread.

l. 27. *Gipsies* : Up to about 1840 this species seems to have flourished in a wild state in the fens of Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, and also in Huntingdonshire. But by 1850 it had almost ceased to exist, as a wildling, in England. Since then it has been semi-domesticated. It has now become a pest in parts of North America.

l. 28. *Dark Dagger* : the name of this moth is not very



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suitable, as in general colour it is often paler than many Grey Dagger moths, so called because of the dagger-like mark on the fore-wing. It is widely distributed in England and Wales, but apparently not common. It feeds from August to October on hawthorn, sloe, plum, pear, and apple.

- l. 29. *Peach blossom* : the olive-brown fore wings of this moth are adorned with five pink-tinged whitish spots, and clouded with brown. It feeds on bramble in July.
- P. 229, l. 1. *Puss* : a rather common moth. The head, thorax, and body are very fluffy ; the fore wings are of a whitish or light grey colour with darker markings and spots.
- l. 3. *Drumbles* : drones, mumbles.
- l. 5. *Blue moths* : such as the Blue-Bordered Carpet moth.
- l. 6. *Scarlet Tigers* : tropical-looking moths, scarlet and brown, spotted and streaked with white. They emerge in June, and seem partial to marshy ground. They are found chiefly in southern England.
- l. 12. *Fen moths* : such as the Fen Wainscot, common in the Norfolk and Cambridge fens.
- l. 13. *Wild angelica* : an aromatic plant, used in cookery and medicine.  
*Lucerne* : purple medick, a leguminous plant resembling clover, cultivated for fodder.
- l. 14. *Hern* : heron, a long-necked long-legged wading bird. See P. 223.
- l. 15. *Mottled Rustics* : there is some variation in the darker mottling and suffusion of the pale brown fore wings. The dark brown or blackish stigmata are generally distinct.  
*Teazel weed* : a plant with prickly leaves and flower-heads.
- l. 16. *Waved Umber* : so called because of the blackish, wavy, oblique transverse lines on the brown fore wings. The males are usually darker than the females. The caterpillar feeds on privet and lilac, and is said to eat currant, broom, and jasmine. The moth is out in April and May.
- l. 20. *Phoenix* : or Clouded Carpet, so called from its variegated colouring. [The Phoenix was a mythical bird anciently supposed to exist in Arabia. According to legend, only one phoenix was alive at a time, and it sat upon one particular tree, of which there was only one specimen. The phoenix lived for five hundred

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years, and from the ashes of the dead body of one phoenix arose another. Compare Milton's "Samson Agonistes," ll. 1699-1702.]

- l. 33. *Spring Usher* : this moth rests on tree-trunks, fences, etc., and the males may thus be found during the day in February.

- l. 35. *The Chinese Character* : probably in reference to the grey-brown oval blotch on the middle of the white fore wings, this moth was known to the older entomologists by the English name of "Goose-egg." On the blotch, however, there are silvery marks on the veins, and below it there is a blackish blotch with some bluish silvery scales upon it. These markings probably suggested the name Chinese Character by which it is generally known.

*The Cinnabar* : so named because of the more or less vermilion colour of the hind wings and the markings on the greyish-black fore wings.

- P. 230, l. 1. *The Brindled Pug* : the ochreous-grey fore wings of this species are crossed by dark, bent lines, and marked with black on the veins.

*Seraphim* : fore wings whitish, with two greyish bands on the basal area. Widely distributed in the southern half of England ; abroad, its range extends to Japan.

- l. 11. *Tea clipper* : a clipper or fast-sailing vessel formerly employed in the tea-trade. A famous one, "The Cutty Sark," is now moored in Falmouth Harbour as a training-ship.

- l. 14. *Painted Lady* : the thistle butterfly, orange-red spotted with white and black. It appears in August, and is generally met with on waste ground, where it loves to sit in the sun on thistle-heads or other flowers.

*Dingy Skipper* : the ground colour of the wings of this butterfly is brown. It frequents woody pastures, hill-sides and heaths.

- l. 17. *Paphia* : a species of butterfly.

*Silver Washed Fritillary* : this is the largest of the British Fritillaries. It is common in woods in Great Britain in July.

- l. 19. *Vanessa Atalanta* : the Red Admiral butterfly. It is common throughout the British Isles in gardens, orchards, and hedgerows in the late summer or early autumn. It is especially fond of fruit and ivy blossom. [Most of the above information is derived from "The Moths of the British Isles" by Richard South, by kind

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

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### *The March Bee.*

P. 230, l. 28. *Moorcocks* : the male of the red grouse.

*Plashes* : shallow pools.

P. 231, l. 1. *Humble-bee* : a large wild bee, which makes a loud humming sound—a bumble-bee.

l. 5. *Wind-flowers* : wood-anemones.

### *Fable.*

P. 232, l. 2. *The tortoiseshell* : a mottled, red, yellow, and black, butterfly.

*The white* : the White Admiral, with white markings on its blackish wings.

l. 3. *The yellow brimstone* : a butterfly with wings of a bright sulphur-yellow colour.

l. 4. *Peacock* : a butterfly with peacock-eyes on its brownish-red velvety wings.

### *Dimensional.*

P. 233, l. 9. *The fourth* : See note on P. 226, l. 11.

l. 12. The sunflower always faces the sun ; that is, the South.

l. 17. *Groundling* : humble.

l. 18. *Lar* : a household deity (Roman).

l. 22. *Flanges* : projecting flat rims.

### *Ribh Considers Christian Love Insufficient.*

P. 234. "The hermit Ribh is an imaginary critic of St. Patrick. His Christianity, come perhaps from Egypt like much early Irish Christianity, echoes pre-Christian thought."—W. B. Yeats.

### *Intimations.*

P. 237, l. 21. *Algol* : the remarkable second-magnitude variable star in the head of Medusa, who is the monster referred to (Algol is in Arabic the ghoul or demon).

l. 22. *A seven-sealèd book* : compare Revelations, v. i. :—"And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside sealed with seven seals."

l. 23. *Orion* : See note on P. 66, l. 9.

l. 24. *Eagle* : the constellation Aquila, sometimes named the Vulture, a constellation of the northern hemisphere,

## NOTES TO THE POEMS

traversed by a bright part of the Milky Way, which is here divided into two branches. It has for its outline the figure of a flying eagle carrying in its talons a boy.

*Dragon* : the northern constellation, Draco. The figure is that of a serpent with seven small coils. One fable concerning it is that when Hercules killed the Dragon guarding the Hesperian fruit, Hera transferred the creature to heaven as a reward for its services.

*Bear* : See note on P. 68, l. 14.

*Lion* : See note on P. 66, l. 9.

l. 25. *Hieroglyph* : See note on P. 20, l. 19.

l. 26. See Psalm xix, 2 : — "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

l. 29. *Cyclic* : moving in cycles, circles, or orbits.

l. 31. See Pope's "Essay on Man," Epistle IV, l. 49 : —  
"Order is Heaven's first law."

P. 238, ll. 1-3. Dante Alighieri (1265-1321), a great Italian poet, author of the "Divina Commedia." In "Paradiso," Canto XVIII, Dante finds the souls of those who had administered justice rightly in the world, so disposed as to form the figure of an eagle (ll. 67-108).

P. 239, l. 15. *Weft of wild glory through the singing's warp* : in weaving, the warp is the fixed part of the fabric, which is stretched perpendicularly, the weavers crossing it with the woof or weft.

l. 18. *The choric harmony* : the music of the spheres. According to ancient theories of astronomy, the planets and stars were fixed in eight concentric spheres, which revolved about the earth, making, as they moved, the music of a perfect diapason. Compare "The Merchant of Venice," V. i. 60-61 : —

"There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st  
But in his motion like an angel sings."

P. 240, l. 11. *A King's nativity* : the birth of Christ.

l. 13. *Fiat of Creation* : the command having for its object the creation of the earth. See Genesis, i. (Latin, *fiat*=let there be made).

ll. 15-17. See Job, xxxviii. 7 : "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

P. 241, ll. 12-14. Compare Exodus, xxvi.

l. 15. See I Corinthians, ii. 9 : "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

### *Etain.*

P. 241. Etain is the queen in Fiona Macleod's (William Sharp's) "The Immortal Hour." William Sharp (1856-1905) had a double personality, for during his lifetime he was known solely by a series of political and critical works, while from 1894 onwards he published secretly, under the name of Fiona Macleod, a series of stories and sketches in poetical prose, which made her a conspicuous Scottish writer. "The Immortal Hour" was made into an opera by Rutland Boughton (born 1878) and first performed in 1914 at Glastonbury.

### *Age Gothique Doré.*

P. 242, l. 23. *King Richard* : King Richard II. See note on P. 17, l. 23.

l. 25. *Book of hours* : a book containing the seven offices of the canonical hours, stated times of day appointed by the canon for prayers.

### *The Trinkets.*

P. 244, l. 14. *Ispahan* : or Isfahan ; formerly the capital of Persia. It is enclosed by orchards and gardens on a fine fertile plain. It was one of the richest and most populous cities of Asia under Shah Abbas the Great in the seventeenth century ; but in 1722, during the Afghan invasion of Persia, its walls were destroyed and it was reduced to a state of decay, from which it has never recovered. In spite of its physical decay it is still the second-largest trading emporium in Persia.



## QUESTIONS ON THE POEMS

1. PROFESSOR SAINTSBURY has said that modern poetry is characterised "by a vagabond curiosity of matter and a tormented unrest of style." What do you understand by this statement? How far is it true of the poetry in this anthology? Give examples of poems to which it applies, and other poems to which it does not apply.

2. Which poets in this anthology would you call traditionalists, and which innovators? Give reasons for your choice.

3. Discuss with reference to any of the poems in the volume the four kinds of meaning—*Sense* (what the poet is saying, what he is directing our attention towards); *Feeling* (what the poet feels towards his subject, his attitude to it); *Tone* (the poet's attitude to his listener, his reader); *Intention* (the poet's aim, conscious or unconscious—*e.g.* to state his thoughts, or to express his feelings about his subject, or to express his attitude to his listener).

4. Discuss, with reference to the anthology, Thomas Hardy's statement that "there is no new poetry; but the new poet—if he carry the flame on further (and if not, he is no new poet)—comes with a new note."

5. Lord Dunsany has said, "What is it to be a poet? It is to see at a glance the glory of the world, to see beauty in all its forms and manifestations, to feel ugliness like a pain, to resent the wrongs of others as bitterly as one's own, to know mankind as others know single men, to know Nature as botanists know a flower, to be thought a fool, to hear at moments the clear voice of God." Mention poems in this volume that illustrate these qualities of a poet.

6. Ask yourself questions of this type on each of the poems read—What is the theme or idea? Is it new in part or in whole? Which poems in the volume (or elsewhere) are similar in subject? Are they different in treatment of the subject? What is the mood of the poem? What is the pattern of the verse? Is it in stanzas or is it continuous,



## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

regular or irregular, rhymed or unrhymed? Which other poems in the volume have the same pattern? Is the language plain and unadorned, or flowery and unusual? Are there any metaphors and similes, and, if so, are they apt and attractive, ordinary or striking? Are the epithets apt and original? Does the sound sometimes echo the sense? Does the poet use any other figures of speech—*e.g.* antithesis, personification? What is his purpose in using them?

7. Illustrate from Roy Campbell's poems what he means by "I have added a few solar colours to contemporary verse."

8. Illustrate from Edmund Blunden's poems his love of the English countryside.

9. Show how Thomas Hardy is obsessed with the transience of the vanishing present.

10. Illustrate from his poems W. H. Davies's clarity and freshness of vision, and his exquisite and individual imagery.

11. How far is it true to say that Walter de la Mare's real world is a dream-world of elusive beauty beyond or beneath the world of sense?

12. Discuss Norman Douglas's statement that D. H. Lawrence was "full of childlike curiosity. He touched upon the common things of earth with tenderness and grace. His genius was pictorial and contemplative."

13. Illustrate T. Sturge Moore's mastery over image and epithet.

14. Illustrate from his poems Herbert Palmer's variety of subject and treatment.

15. Illustrate Victoria Sackville-West's intimacy with the English countryside.

16. How far is W. J. Turner's imagery derived from distant or imaginary lands?

17. Explain and comment on Maurice Baring's remark that W. B. Yeats's poetry "belongs to the world of those who, while withdrawing themselves from the busy market-place, have looked into their own souls and understood the passions and the dreams of mankind, of those who have wandered in the secret places of Nature, and have gone beyond into the unknown land which reaches right up to the shores of Lethe."

18. Quote striking examples of Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Climax, Metonymy, and other figures of speech.

19. Write an account of the poems in the Anthology by the following: W. H. Auden, Julian Bell, Stella Benson

## QUESTIONS ON THE POEMS

Edmund Blunden, Roy Campbell, Wilfred Rowland Childe, Richard Church, Edward Davison, Walter de la Mare, T. S. Eliot, John Gawsworth, Stella Gibbons, F. R. Higgins, A. E. Housman, C. Day Lewis, Hugh MacDiarmid, Michael McKenna, Hamish Maclaren, Louis MacNeice, Robert Nichols, Wilfred Owen, Herbert Palmer, Ruth Pitter, Michael Roberts, Isaac Rosenberg, Victoria Sackville-West, Jan Struther, W. B. Yeats, Andrew Young.

20. Mention some half-dozen sonnets in the anthology, and deduce from them the main characteristics of a sonnet.

21. Mention, and write an account of, four poems on each of the following subjects : Birds ; Flowers ; The Seasons ; Death ; Famous People ; Animals ; Love of one's Native Country ; The Sea ; Foreign Countries ; Life and its Meaning ; Mysticism.

22. Make a list of your favourite poems in the anthology and give reasons for your choice.

23. Give the context of the following passages and relate each to the theme of the poem :—

- (i) Much is there waits you we have missed ;  
Much lore we leave you worth the knowing.
- (ii) O happy happy wounds,  
Conditioned by existence in humanity,  
That have such powers to heal them !
- (iii) What is pure,  
Or what is lovely ?  
All is, and doth all endure.
- (iv) And am content that other men in turn  
Against my darkness shall the brighter burn.
- (v) Far away and long ago  
Her loveliest song began to chime.
- (vi) Time has borne down that gracious argument  
Which was your advocate where Isis flows.
- (vii) Tenants of the house,  
Thoughts of a dry bone in a dry season.
- (viii) Where forms of power and beauty change and  
pass,  
One epic to eternity remains.
- (ix) Vanessa Atalanta, who was borne  
In sunny splendour on an off shore gale  
From coasts of Africa, to meet the hail  
Battering the Kentish pebbles in the dawn.
- (x) Poetry needs must breathe through lips of man  
Desperate defiance and immortal courage.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

- (xi) I will be your house, clean, high, and strong,  
And you shall live in me, all winter long.
- (xii) They will not come, the gentian days,  
With the cornfield white in summer.
- (xiii) And I thought of the albatross,  
And I wished he would come back, my snake.
- (xiv) You swept across the waters like a Queen,  
Finding a path where never trackway showed.
- (xv) I study hatred with great diligence,  
For that's a passion in my own control.
- (xvi) I am an cavesdropper of loveliness.
- (xvii) Tarry this last hour out, take your last look  
round,  
Greet finally the earth, greet leaf and root and  
stock.
- (xviii) O the terror that treads close behind  
the trailing mantle of all loveliness.
- (xix) Adieu, sweet-memored dust, I go  
After the Master for His dream.
- (xx) I dizzied at that tangled flight  
And the woodland's surf-sound.
- (xxi) No Winter's morn, when I went forth,  
Could force on me a sunless North.
- (xxii) Th' implacable and bitter sense  
Of Time that hastes and Death who need not  
haste.
- (xxiii) O, Hunter, your own shadow stands  
Within your forest lair !
- (xxiv) For all things violent here and vain  
Lie open and all at ease  
Where God has girded heaven to guard  
Her holy vanities.
- (xxv) Only where water runs I can forget.
- (xxvi) And make us as Newton was, who in his garden  
watching  
The apple falling towards England, became aware  
Between himself and her of an eternal tie.
- (xxvii) For there is no measuring a song,  
Nor counting upon truth.
- (xxviii) I shall come back at last,  
In this dark house to die.
- (xxix) Our murders have not still'd the thrush,  
Nor to the white hills brought decay.
- (xxx) Passion or conquest, wander where they will,  
Attend upon them still.

## QUESTIONS ON THE POEMS

- (xxxi) We all have the remote air of a legend.  
 (xxxii) I'm in clover now, nor know  
           Who made honey long ago.  
 (xxxiii) So shall I put much argument by,  
           And solve a lifetime's mysteries.  
 (xxxiv) A man and his tools make a man and his trade.  
 (xxxv) Alone I'll mourn my old friend, while the cold  
           dawn  
           Thins out the holy candelight.  
 (xxxvi) For I made, as we lay in the grass by that road  
           This poem—a gem from the head of a toad.  
 (xxxvii) I learned it all from my Eve,  
           The warm dumb wisdom.  
 (xxxviii) Soldier of fortune, north-west Jack,  
           Old hard-times' braggart, there you blow !  
 (xxxix) Read between these furrows a desperate appeal  
           Of men who had no other voice.  
       (xl) I miss the orchard and my wasp-filled flask.  
           There are no bumble-bees on the sea's back.  
       (xli) A starlit or a moonlit dome disdains  
           All that man is.  
       (xlii) I lived in quiet, screened, unknown,  
           Pondering upon some stick or stone.  
       (xliii) For here's the beauty of all country miles,  
           Their rolling pattern and their space.  
       (xliv) Lion, fish, and swan  
           Act, and are gone  
           Upon Time's toppling wave.  
       (xlv) Make the brooks pound to the seas  
           And the earth shine young again.  
       (xlvi) Queens should be cold and wise,  
           And she loved little things.  
       (xlvii) Their eyes they must restrain  
           From seeking the far sky.  
       (xlviii) For Truth was given unto the angels ;  
           And they are melody and fire.  
       (xlix) Here sleeps the Silurist ; the loved physician.  
           (l) This pliant wood like expert whip  
           Snaps action in its voice.  
           (li) Can he evade the over-shadowing night ?  
           Are there not somewhere chinks of braided light ?  
           (lii) I, too, have burned the wind with fiery flags  
           Who now am but a roost for empty words.  
           (liii) Beauty here I do not seek  
           More than I sought it on my mother's cheek.

## POEMS OF TWENTY YEARS

- (liv) A dun buck couched upon the left,  
A white doe to their right.
- (lv) The little owl that cries by night  
Shall voice thine intimate despair.
- (lvi) Wenlock Edge was umbered,  
And bright was Abdon Burf.
- (lvii) I see descending from the ships at dawn  
slim naked men from Cnossos.
- (lviii) Man's days are as grass, his thought but as thistle-  
seed wind-sown ;  
I will plod up the pass, and nourish the turf with  
my shin-bone.
- (lix) Never to allow gradually the traffic to smother  
With noise and fog the flowering of the spirit.
- (lx) We whistled while he shaved us with his scythe.
- (lxi) What alien ports enriched their teeming hold  
With crates of fruit or bars of unwrought gold ?
- (lxii) Soft as the music that King Saul  
Had feared beyond his tent.
- (lxiii) But when this dies, I seem to see  
Five petals on the sliding stream.
- (lxiv) We were the last romantics—chose for theme  
Traditional sanctity and loveliness.
- (lxv) Yet like Ben Jonson's lily, she  
Lent to her day a darling grace.
- (lxvi) Mute in their beauty they serve him,  
Body and mind.
- (lxvii) The son of woman turns his brow  
West from forty counties now.
- (lxviii) What's blight and age, or any sudden thing  
That starts new life out of life's perishing !
- (lxix) But mine in my car is safe,  
Just a little white with the dust.
- (lxx) And we plough deepest in the Earth  
Who ride the nearest to the Sun.
- (lxxi) None gives them heed, and they must live their days  
Neglected and despised.
- (lxxii) And as he mouths Time's lullabies, his beads  
Barely keep count of prayers in yawned retreats.
- (lxxiii) And still, whenever men and women gather  
For talk and laughter on a summer night,  
Shall not that lamp rekindle ?
- (lxxiv) Bear them we can, and if we can we must  
Shoulder the sky, my lad, and drink your ale.



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